



California State University, San Bernardino  
**CSUSB ScholarWorks**

---

Electronic Theses, Projects, and Dissertations

Office of Graduate Studies

---

5-2020

# PLANTANDO SEMILLAS DE LIDERAZGO: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ABOUT LATINO PARENT LEADERSHIP

Sussan Ortega

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/etd>



Part of the [Education Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Ortega, Sussan, "PLANTANDO SEMILLAS DE LIDERAZGO: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ABOUT LATINO PARENT LEADERSHIP" (2020). *Electronic Theses, Projects, and Dissertations*. 1268.  
<https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/etd/1268>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Office of Graduate Studies at CSUSB ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses, Projects, and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of CSUSB ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@csusb.edu](mailto:scholarworks@csusb.edu).

PLANTANDO SEMILLAS DE LIDERAZGO: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL  
STUDY ABOUT LATINO PARENT LEADERSHIP

---

A Dissertation  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

---

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Education  
in  
Educational Leadership

---

by  
Sussan Ortega

May 2021

PLANTANDO SEMILLAS DE LIDERAZGO: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL  
STUDY ABOUT LATINO PARENT LEADERSHIP

---

A Dissertation  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

---

by  
Sussan Ortega  
May 2021

Approved by:

Dr. Enrique Murillo Jr., Committee Chair, Education

Dr. Jaqueline E. Romano, Committee Member

Dr. J. Manuel Gonzalez, Committee Member

© 2021 Sussan Ortega

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore factors that contribute to the development of Latino parental leadership. The research project was a qualitative phenomenological study with semi-structured interviews and further triangulated through archival data and a focus group interview through the theoretical framework of community cultural wealth. Themes emerged listening to parent *testimonios*, themes such as *Identidad* (Identity), *Capacitarme* (Equipping myself), *Ganas de Aprender* (Willingness to learn), and *Soy el vehiculo de mi Comunidad* (I am the vessel of my community). The findings conclude Latino parent leadership derives out of necessity to support their children in their educational journey and a need for their community to have guidance and the resources readily accessible. The results also conclude that Latino parent leadership occurs through cultural brokers (teachers, administrators, and parents) who connect and empower parents to take on leadership roles and provide a space to activate parent voice on school campuses. The data led the researcher to conceptualize a model on how Latino Parent Leadership occurs in cyclical stages. The stages reveal community cultural wealth traits that benefit the parent at the early stages of parental leadership development and, in the end, become a communal gain resource. Recommendations for future studies on Latino Parent Leadership are needed to explore the effects their leadership development correlates with the success of their children's education.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to begin by thanking the participants in this study for trusting me with your testimonials. Research is not possible without you, and I am humbled to have the honor of adding your voice in academia to capture Latino parent leadership. Your dedication to our community is admirable.

My journey towards completing my dissertation has been long and one of the most challenging yet rewarding things I have ever done. Therefore, I want to express my deepest, most sincere gratitude to my chair, Dr. Enrique Murillo Jr., for believing and connecting with me. You listened, helped me navigate, and empowered me through this process. I found someone relatable at the university level, which made this Chicana believe in herself. It empowered me to present at conferences, speak up in class, and reevaluate my voice in academia, but most importantly, it made me visible on campus. I will forever be grateful for this journey Dr. Murillo; your mentorship and dedication to Latinos in education is inspirational. *De todo corazón gracias*. To Dr. J. Manny Gonzalez, thank you for being someone I can reach out to for guidance and support. Your calm and collective words allowed me to focus on some of the most challenging moments in this process—Gracias, Dr. Jaqueline E. Romano, for being part of my educational journey. Your lens made me reflect on my work and made me believe in myself when I doubted myself.

I am forever thankful for Dr. Edna Martinez. You took the time to revisit me as a student, encouraged me to return, and connected with me when I felt

disconnected. Your mentorship goes beyond academic walls. You knew what I needed and introduced me to lifelong friends. Claudia and Olivia, thank you for the gift of time. Our weekly write-ups, check-ins, and constant words of encouragement made this journey possible. I never thought the day would come.

SI SE PUDO AMIGAS!

## DEDICATION

To my children, Olin and Luna, this is dedicated to you. You were my inspiration, motivation, and determination to complete this. You gave me the strength when I didn't think I had any to spare. May this be a reminder to dream big and know that all your goals are possible when you believe in yourself.

To my husband, Anthony, We have reached so many milestones together. I am honored to call you my life partner. I am still standing after this long journey because you believed in me. Your words of encouragement, constant motivation, late-night convos, and dedication to our children kept me going. This accomplishment is yours as well—Te Amo.

To my parents *este proyecto es representación de sus sacrificios, amor y apoyo de ustedes este logro no es solo mío pero también de ustedes. Porque cada uno de sus sacrificios, me llevaron a lograr mi meta. Ustedes son mi más grande bendición.*

To my familia Ortega y Guaracha, I appreciate your support, love, and encouragement throughout the journey.

To my prima Luisa, for being my soundboard around being a mother and a scholar. The path may look a bit different for us, but here we are, making it happen, navigating a thin line between aspirations and motherhood. You are resilient. You are next, Doctora Ortega.



To my ancestors- for keeping me grounded, connected, and motivated throughout the process. I reflect daily on the importance of paving the way for future generations.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
DEDICATION .....	vi
LIST OF TABLES .....	x
LIST OF FIGURES .....	xi
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION .....	1
Problem Statement .....	3
Purpose Statement .....	4
Research Questions .....	5
Significance of the Study .....	6
Delimitations .....	6
Definition of Key Terms.....	7
Summary .....	7
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	9
Defining Parent Leadership .....	10
Context of Latino Students in Public Education .....	11
History of Latino Parent Leadership in Education .....	12
Latino Parents' Empowerment.....	16
Conceptual Framework: Community Cultural Wealth .....	20
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY .....	24
Researcher's Positionality.....	25

Research Design .....	29
Research Setting .....	31
Research Sample .....	31
Data Collection .....	33
Data Analysis.....	35
Summary .....	36
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS.....	38
Participant Demographics.....	38
Organization and Findings .....	39
Familial Capital .....	61
Summary .....	74
CHAPTER FIVE: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION .....	76
Overview.....	77
Summary of the Study .....	78
Parent Contributions to Academia .....	83
Recommendation for School District: <i>Consejos</i> .....	85
Next Steps for Educational Reform.....	87
Limitations of the Study.....	89
Conclusion .....	89
APPENDIX A: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL .....	91
APPENDIX B: PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT FLYER.....	94
REFERENCES .....	96

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Participant Data ..... 39

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Parental leadership continuum .....	20
Figure 2. Community cultural wealth (Oliver & Shapiro, 1995) .....	22

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background

Partnerships among schools, families, and communities are central to improving student achievement and a key indicator of struggling students' opportunities (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). However, various assumptions are made when parents do not align with the traditional partnership. Parents' lack of education, poverty, and linguistic and cultural differences are barriers to their children's school involvement. As a result, English learner students are among the lowest-achieving student groups in the country (Chrispeels & Rivero, 2001).

Leading parents and communities in a struggling educational system are rarely considered a resource for change efforts (Oakes & Rogers, 2006). As a result, Delgado-Gaitan (1991) argues the importance of mobilizing underrepresented families to share power and decision-making with schools (Lopez, Krieder & Coffman, 2005). Furthermore, Henderson (2004) states parents have gone beyond superficial partnerships with schools to become partners outside of schools to advocate, organize as a community, and hold schools accountable for improvement. Parents can be a significant force initiating this mobilization and strategy creation.

Zarate and the Tomas Rivera Policy Institute (2007) conducted a study on Latino parents' perceptions of school involvement. Results showed a distinction

between what parents define as involvement and their participation. Two distinct strands evolved: academic involvement and life participation. "When asked to define parental involvement in education, Latino parents mentioned participation in their children's lives more frequently than academic involvement" (p. 8). The two concepts resulted in cultural discrepancies of what parental involvement is. The discrepancies are distinguished as *educación* vs. formal education. Defining students' involvement daily at home by providing guidance, manners, open communication, and trust is part of life education at home. The *educación* is a holistic approach to learning and personal improvement (Reese, Balzano, Gallimore, & Goldenberg, 1995).

In prior research, the parent's voice is minimal or missing. This study sought to provide a space for parents to voice their perspectives and share experiences as parent leaders. Additionally, this study builds on Delgado-Gaitan's (1994) interpretation of *consejos* and how Latino parents interlace topics of family, society expectations, and policy. *Consejos*, as Delgado-Gaitan describes, is the cultural congruency between family, community, and the educational setting that benefits student achievement. Parents' empowerment sustains trust and communication.

Both oppressed and oppressor must participate in a transformative space, what Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López, and Tejeda (1999) call a constructed third space, to close gaps in education. The third space permits discourse from various perspectives and positioning to transform conflicts and differences into

rich zones of collaboration and learning. The third space allows dialogue to develop knowledge in a multi-voiced manner to construct cultural resources. These resources provide an opportunity to make changes and reform. In a third space, educational policymakers and practitioners might develop a dynamic understanding of goals, leading to understanding diversity in education. The third space can provide multiple and even conflicting mediational tools for higher levels of consciousness. Students, educators, parents, leaders, theorists, and policymakers merge in spaces with diverse ideas that engage all stakeholders equally (Gold, Simon, & Brown, 2005). Parent participation and inclusion will further strengthen visibility for their children and the community, especially Latino parent participation.

Latinos are the largest growing population in the United States. Despite these patterns, this population faces challenges along the educational pipeline, deficit stigma, and subtractive schooling (Anzaldúa, 2002; García & Guerra, 2004; Solórzano & Solórzano 1995; Valenzuela, 1999; Wortham, Murillo, & Hamann, 2002). Leading the research project to the experience of one group of Latino parent leaders through the lens of community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2006) and document their experiences and contributions to academia towards understanding Latino students' needs.

### Problem Statement

Often, researchers focus on parent involvement in the K-12 system. Although researchers such as Zarate (2007) state that Latino parents bring a



different lens to being an involved parent, their involvement supports formal schooling with the educación at home. There is minimal research on Latino parent leadership. This perspective is often excluded in public school spaces, resulting in the lack of voice in meeting Latino students' needs. Vincent (1996) noted there are structures in place for parents to voice their concerns in semi-decision-making spaces, allowing them to modify and contribute to previously made administrative decisions. The problem with this model is the misalignment of what institutions expect from parents and what it means to be involved in their children's education. The consequences lead to parents' exclusion in active school leadership, isolating advocacy for their children's needs. Therefore, understanding Latino parent leaders' experiences gives voice to those voiceless (Freire, 1993).

There is minimal research on establishing Latino parent leadership. This phenomenological work focused on parents as a resource. As Hill and Torres (2010) highlight, education is traditionally highly valued in Latino families, yet barriers interfere with college enrollment for Latino youth. The study analyzes parent leaders' experiences as they enter parent leadership advocacy and these efforts' effect on their families and schools.

#### Purpose Statement

This qualitative phenomenology research's purpose was to explore Latino parent leaders' lived experiences in one advanced parent group in the Inland Empire and capture their testimonios to understand further how Latino parent

leadership emerges. The lack of academic research resulted in capturing Latino parents' leadership experiences. The researcher sought to counter-argue the deficit narratives about Latino parents not taking active roles in their children's education and reframing their narratives through the lens of community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005). The search led to more information on Latino parent leaders' lived experience in one advanced parent group in the Inland Empire. Research has found that successfully negotiating the American school system requires understanding the cultural differences between families and schools regarding social capital types (Coleman, 1998; Lareau 2002; Ream & Palardy, 2008). Thus, this study captured Latino parent leaders' voices by conducting interviews that yielded insights and constructed a dynamic communication and collaboration space from parent leaders' testimonios. The spaces to voice transmitted parents' power contribute to academia and share the wealth of knowledge on Latino parent leadership. Therefore, this phenomenological study aimed to capture Latino parent leaders' experience in one advanced parent group Inland Empire.

### Research Questions

The study addressed the following questions:

**RQ1:** How do Latino parent leaders describe their leadership experiences in one particular Latino parent leadership group in the Inland Empire?

**RQ2:** What leads Latino parents to serve in leadership roles within one particular parent leadership group in the Inland Empire?

**RQ3:** In what ways, if any, do Latino parents demonstrate leadership?

#### Significance of the Study

The phenomenological study explored parents' leadership and the extent to which their leadership roles have developed. The results may provide educational practitioners with meaningful strategies to incorporate leadership opportunities for parents in their settings. This study is significant because it captures a narrative typically not captured in academia's prior discussions on valuable knowledge (Calderón et al., 2012). Additionally, it historically reviewed Latino parent leadership through an asset-based approach.

#### Delimitations

The study captures narratives to understand further how Latino parent leadership emerges, delimiting this study because other leader members of the organization's perspectives were not included in this study.

The study's limitations possibly narrowed the findings. However, an aspiration to present powerful counterstories that challenge hegemonic storylines and raise critical consciousness about social and racial injustice when parents' voices are excluded from the educational system (Yosso, 2006, p. 10) was the goal. The voice captured will empower parent leaders to share their experiences to expand on Latino parents' research as active and central in their children's education. The study has practical implications because it will provide a counter-narrative on the importance of establishing meaningful and impactful

relationships with parents within leadership capacities for the betterment of Latino student achievement.

### Definition of Key Terms

The following terms were used throughout the study. Defining the terms may provide clarity.

- *Latino*: This study uses the term interchangeably with Chicano/Latino
- *Parent involvement*: Instituted in traditional bureaucratic and inflexible school environments.
- *Parent leadership*: The process whereby a parent is empowered to take a leadership role for the betterment of their child's education and community.

### Summary

This study captured the testimonial narratives of four Mexican mothers' journey towards parent leadership. The study describes how their leadership evolved using the conceptual framework of community cultural wealth, examining what leads the mothers into leadership roles and their family and community. The study highlights the parent voice and identifies key themes that emerged from the data.

Chapter Two begins by identifying how Latino parent leadership is defined for this study as well as discuss *educación* versus education and provide a historical context of Latinos in education. Furthermore, the chapter reexamines

critical historical cases through the leadership role parents took to provide an equitable education for their children. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the conceptual framework for the study and the importance of community cultural wealth in education.

Chapter Three provides the methodology of the study and research. The chapter begins with positionality and provides context for entering the project. The chapter continues with the steps for data collection and the strategies used to analyze the data. The chapter concludes by laying out the tools used to conduct the study.

Chapter Four lays out the findings through the theoretical framework and themes that emerged from the research. The themes of *identidad* (identity), *capacitarme* (equipping myself), *ganas de aprender* (willingness to learn), and *vehículo de mi comunidad* (I am the vessel of my community), captured the experiences that lead this group of mothers to take on leadership roles in their communities.

Chapter Five concludes with recommendations for practitioners and concludes with the next steps for educational reform.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Historically, educational policymakers have discussed parents as significant influencers to improve academic achievement, yet parents do not have a shared leadership role in policy construction. The role of the parent is mentioned as an indicator but always distributed as a set of directions (Ladwig 1994). In this review of the literature, the aim is to present how Latino parents have approached leadership roles in their children's education, leading them to establish an active voice, create safe spaces, and build alliances to seek equitable educational experiences for their children.

The purpose of this literature review is to examine; historically, the leadership role Latino parents have taken in being a voice for their children's right to equitable access to public education in Southern California. Reviewing history allows a better understanding of the factors that contribute to the development of Latino parent leadership today. Educational researchers Hill and Taylor (2004) found that parent involvement is an indicator of student success. However, many Latino parents feel disconnected from the educational institution, which leads to miscommunication regarding expectations for parents, students, communities, and schools. As a result, school leaders' deficit thinking creates misconceptions of parents' participation and contributes to subtractive schooling experiences.

Historically speaking, educational disparities vary vastly between racial and ethnic groups (Coleman et al., 1966; Jencks et al. 1972; Jencks & Phillips, 1998; Lee, 2002; Ogbu, 1992, Rothstein, 2004; Steinberg, Dornbush, & Brown, 1992; Thernstrom & Thernstrom, 2001). Rumberger and Arellano (2008) state there is also evidence that some of these practices, including instructional and parent involvement practices in schools, vary by the student body's racial and socioeconomic composition, which could also lead to differences in student achievement between racial and ethnic groups (Griffith, 1998; Stipek, 2014). Furthermore, often, education excludes students' parents from policy and initiatives related to Latino students' academic success. The exclusion of parents negates their voice and isolates their potential advocacy for their child and fellow students. Therefore, parents must be involved in their children's education for institutional change. However, there may be different ways that Latino parents have defined parental leadership.

### Defining Parent Leadership

Zarate (2007) states a misalignment between what Latinos view as being involved in their children's education and what the institution of schooling expects from parents. Latino parents equate involvement in their children's education with participation in their lives. Involvement in their children's lives ensures that their formal schooling complements with educación taught in the home. Latino parents' lens differs from that of the institution regarding the educación that parents present to their children at home.

However, despite their numbers in schools and the general population, Latinos have the lowest rate of associate's degree program completion at 22%, and only .5% hold graduate degrees. The Pew Research Center (2009) also reported that Latino students have the highest dropout rates and the lowest college completion rates. These rates are explained by research on the risk factors contributing to Latino youth's low achievement and attainment (Eamon, 2005; García-Coll et al., 2002; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005; Prelow & Loukas, 2003). Currently, only 25% of graduating Latino students meet admission requirements for the University of California, and those admitted to 4-year institutions have low attendance and graduation rates.

#### Context of Latino Students in Public Education

To begin this discourse, we must review the context and patterns of Latino students in public education. In this context, the prevailing discourse regarding Latinos in education has perpetuated deficit thinking. Valencia (1997) defines deficit thinking as the notion that students of low economic backgrounds and students of color fail because they have internal deficits. Valencia examined the deficit theory that Mexican Americans do not hold education as a priority, resulting in inadequate familial socialization for academic competence (Valencia & Black 2002). This notion contributes to dismissing families' disconnecting from school based on their family's indifference to education. Although the deficit model is impactful, various testimonios on Latino parental involvement provide a different perspective (Valencia, 2002). Flores (2017) reported that Latino



students and their families prioritize education, yet little research exists on moving beyond parent involvement and establishing parent leadership.

### History of Latino Parent Leadership in Education

Latinos have a history of struggle when it comes to education.

Segregation, corporal punishment, educational tracking, and forced conformity or assimilation to the dominant society. The sections below review landmark legal Latino cases to highlight parent leadership examples and how they contributed to education policy reform. Reframing history through the lens of parent leadership adds to the testimony around the commitment that parents have to their children and the community's education.

#### Lemon Grove Incident, (California, 1931)

Thirty-six years after *Plessy v. Ferguson*, a Southern California school board segregated Mexican students, over which a group of Mexican and Mexican American parents and their children sued. The 1931 Lemon grove case was a historical victory against school segregation (Madrid, 2008). In the town of Lemon Grove, more than 70 children of Mexican descent were placed by school administrators by their school principal to attend a hastily constructed, two-room segregated school on the Mexican side of town (Madrid, 2008). The students' parents organized and protested for change. Madrid (2008) states,

Although the parents seemingly were operating from a position of weakness, they neither lacked courage nor ignorance of their rights; they adamantly refused to send their children, numbering 70, to a school that

resembled a barn and characterized an inferior instructional program. (p. 17)

The parents created a parent group called the Comité de Vecinos De Lemon Grove and sought help in the Mexican community (Alvarez, 1984). These parents demonstrated leadership by advocating for their children and their community. The case speaks to the *testimonios* of Latino parent's advocacy and leadership for a better education. Although this was a great victory, similar incidents arose in the following decades.

Mendez v. Westminster School District (California, 1946)

On March 2, 1945, five Mexican American fathers challenged school segregation in the Ninth Federal District Court in Los Angeles (Wollenberg, 1971). The fathers filed a federal lawsuit over the segregation of Mexican American students. Gonzalo Mendez organized parents from the community to protest against school segregation. Parents' consistent advocacy sets a precedent for educational equity. In 1947, Mendez v Westminster's case was a part of a process that stripped away the formal structure of legalized segregation (McCormick & Ayala 2007), and Mendez returned to school, changing history.

Aspira v. Board of Education of the City of New York (New York, 1972)

A community organization in New York filed a lawsuit against the New York City Board of Education about English learners' student rights. This case was monumental in paving the way for bilingual education in districts.

Puerto Rican parents and the Puerto Rican community were deeply involved in the bilingual education movement during the 1970s and 1980s. Parent Advocates for Bilingual Education (PABE) organized a successful demonstration against New York City Schools' Chancellor Macchiarola, who wanted to undermine bilingual education (Pousada 1987). Efforts to contain the Puerto Rican community at the local level, leading to the Coalition to Defend Bilingual Education, the National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights, the Puerto Rican Educators Association, and the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund. Garcia,(2011 p. 137)

Parents' leadership involvement towards language preservation contributes to the cultural wealth children come to school with daily. The advocacy experiences from parents allow other families to benefit and pave the way for equity to occur. The current state of Bilingual Education, today in California, has recognized a commitment to fully equipping students with world languages skills to appreciate and engage students globally (CDE, 2018).

Serna v. Portales Municipal School District (New Mexico, 1974)

Romana Serna and parents with Spanish surnames joined a lawsuit when she was refused school enrollment at Portales School District because Judy did not speak English. The case against the district diverted to inadequate schools for minority children in New Mexico. It alleged that the school district failed to provide bilingual and bicultural education to meet Mexican American students' needs while also requesting more Mexican American decent teachers to be

hired. Federal and Circuit courts favored the Serna Family. Holmes (1975). The case resulted in strengthening the rights of English Learners and assuring districts are meeting the linguist needs.

Parental leadership in voicing the importance of making their children feel welcomed and valued on campus speaks to the leadership parents can contribute to districts as they create curriculum, hire, and create programs to meet their districts' diverse needs.

#### Plyler v. Doe (Texas, 1982)

In June 1982, a Supreme Court ruling declared in *Plyer vs. Doe* a monumental decision to provide public education for immigrant status students. The case has enacted equal education access to all. Olivas (2011) states a Catholic lay worker called a local lawyer about children told they could not attend school, and the lawyer agreed to represent the families. Also, the students were represented by a community organization called The Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF).

Community advocacy groups like MALDEF provide context on the need for cultural brokers and opportunities to support navigating educational spaces to voice the children in the community.

#### LULAC v. Richards (Texas, 1987)

In 1987, a lawsuit was filed by MALDEF representing League of Latin American Citizens (LULAC), identifying the discrimination Mexican American students at the border were facing not being able to attend universities close to

home. The inequities to Texan border students reflected the quality of education, higher education opportunities, and the access to resources versus non-border students' available options. The lawsuit led the Texas legislation to reanalyze, budget, allocate resources, and listen to border students' needs. (Oretgon, 2014)

MALDEF, as mentioned, became the cultural broker in the community to establish the bridge by listening to community needs and connecting the resources to voice the requirements for a fair chance at all educational levels. The result guided leaders to establish a plan of action.

In summary, Latino parents who established their political consciousness became change agents and found power in collectivism (Paredes Scribner, & Fernández, 2017). a collective experience throughout history is that of Latino parents as advocates.

### Latino Parents' Empowerment

Khalifa, Jennings, Briscoe, Oleszweski, and Abdi (2013) note that educational leaders make decisions without community input. The misalignment between community needs and data-driven needs can create tension when decisions are being made, causing a misinterpretation. About school closure based community voices and the importance a school is to a community but instead make decisions objective and data-driven. When immigrant communities send their children to school, they exhibit a level of blind trust in the system of education. However, communication, expectations, and accountability are critical components of students' success. Thus, it is difficult for the bridge between

parents and schools because schools fail to include the culture, perceptions, and community sensibilities and experiences viewed by parents as subtractive schooling (Valenzuela, 1999). A central theme of this research about parent leadership is parents want their stories heard).

The results of defining, analyzing, and capturing Latino parents' leadership in their community are positive changes in their children's lives. Ishimaru (2014) noted the importance of looking at parents as active educational leaders and contributors to address educational changes. By giving parents time, voice, and inclusion, schools begin to provide equity and educational rights for all (Ishimaru, (2014). Challenging the deficit conception challenges This approach to school reform challenges deficit conceptions by emphasizing and strengthening parents' capacity to exercise power and leadership to create more equitable learning environments (Evans, 2015). Providing opportunities for parents to collaborate and communicate their concerns allows for the collaborative conversations needed to bring transformative change to Latino students' education.

The parent voice leads conversations for change. Delgado-Gaitan (2014) analyzed Mexican American parents' role in their children's education in terms of their views, norms, and link to their children's education. Delgado-Gaitan demystified the deficit hypothesis by stating parents do care and have a shared vision of education's value. Participants valued education as a resource or tool for success. Furthermore, Delgado-Gaitan recommended interlacing the family

and the sociopolitical arena to support students through Consejos, or the direct interaction between children and parents.

Fernández and Paredes Scribner (2018) reanalyzed the parental engagement framework through educational leadership and Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth framework. The researchers examined Paulo Freire's ideas on the systematic change regarding the need to include the community, parents, and schools' voices. Change is a process that requires collaboration, and parents bring much knowledge to school sites, so their voice matters for this change to occur. Furthermore, Oaks and Rogers (2007) found schools must engage parents in the educational conversation for educational reforms to happen the most. The study continues by reviewing how a group of parents formed a Latino parent group at a school. The researchers found that parents organized themselves to engage other parents. The study concluded that community cultural wealth supported the parents' leadership abilities and empowerment (Oakes & Rogers 2007).

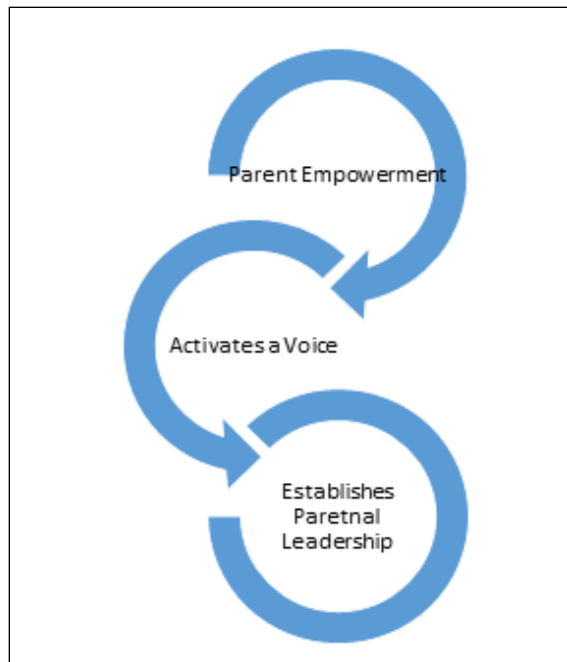
Parent leadership goes beyond influencing and benefiting a child's needs to helping meet the needs of the larger community (Marschall, 2008). Studies have found that a strong partnership among families, schools, and communities contributes to academic achievement (Ishimaru 2014). Ishimaru (2014) sets the context of involvement in four areas: parents and community, the goals pursued the change of strategies enacted, the process of education reform

Also, the higher the family's engagement and awareness of school around cultural and community issues, the higher their school leadership participation (Cunningham, Kreider, & Ocon, 2012).

Evans and Shirley (2008) studied parents who organized themselves in Boston, Massachusetts, into the Jamaica Plain Parent Organizing Project. These parents felt that their participation was imperative to creating a systematic change to education in their community. This group organized and advocated for not only their children but the community as a whole under the idea that "what is good for the community is good for the child" (Evans & Shirley, 2008, p. 89). The researchers used a qualitative approach to discern the significance of parent leadership and community activism, sharing themes of confidence, knowledge, and support.

The review of the literature provided me the opportunity to conceptualize the process in Figure 1 and to further research parental leadership efforts of one advanced parent group in the Inland Empire parent and their experiences with activating their leadership. By capturing the parent voice builds on community cultural wealth as an asset and to make more significant gains for their community.





*Figure 1. Parental leadership continuum*

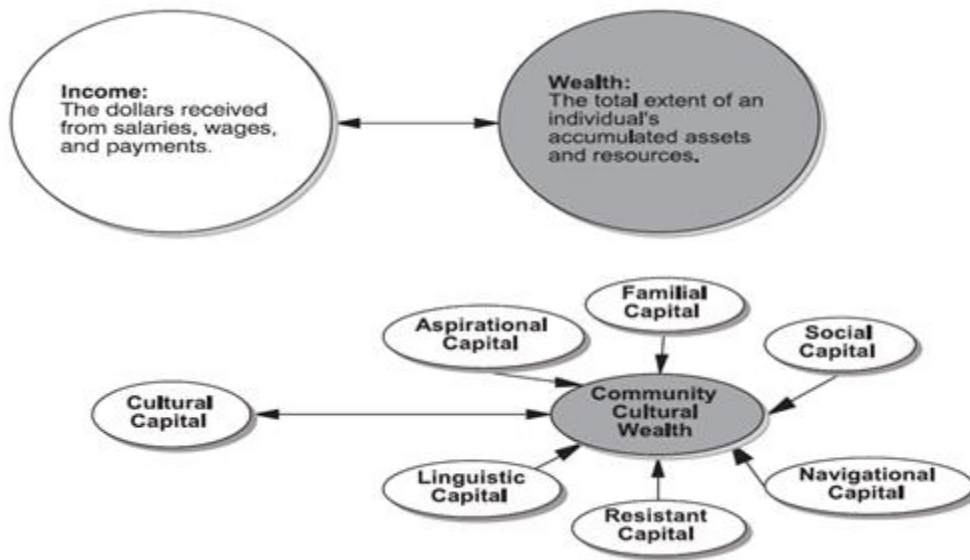
### Conceptual Framework: Community Cultural Wealth

The norm is the criterion by which all other cultural groups are judged and to which they are compared (Yosso, 2005). Valenzuela (1999) writes that this becomes problematic because schools operate under the assumption that disadvantaged students lack the knowledge, abilities, and cultural capital to succeed academically. Consequently, schools see minority students through a deficient mindset. However, as identified in this literature review, historically, parents have demonstrated resistance, sacrifices, persistence, and courage through collective action. Through the critical race lens, researchers shift from a lens of cultural capital to one of community cultural wealth. This lens recognizes

that parent leaders can contribute to the research on their children and communities.

Anzaldua (1990) states that if theories silence communities, then theories can also empower communities. These conceptual frameworks challenge deficit thinking into an asset-based approach and placing emphasis on the contributions parents can bring to the school districts and not placing fault on poor academics.

Yosso (2005) noted that aspirations are developed within social and familial contexts, often through linguistic storytelling and advice (Consejos) that offer specific navigational goals to challenge (resist) oppressive conditions. Therefore, aspirational capital overlaps with each of the other forms of capital. Through a lens based on community cultural wealth, the researcher can capture participants' voices and experiences. Through the lens of community cultural capital, we can contribute to the literature and recognize the many systems that support parent leaders in their empowerment journey.



*Figure 2. Community cultural wealth (Oliver & Shapiro, 1995)*

Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth model focuses on people of color's experiences, shedding light on the assets accumulated through lived experiences. The community cultural wealth model encompasses six types of capital: aspirational, navigational, social, linguistic, familial, and resistant. These types refer to the diversity of knowledge students come prepared with when they enter the formal education environment. The layers of knowledge demonstrate students possess the tools to support their success.

Gándara's (2009) research focused on the social mobility of minority households and how those strengths empower mobility. Besides, Ladson Billings (1994) found culturally relevant pedagogy was critical in ensuring students are taught in ways that are relatable to them learn. Yosso (2005) challenges researchers to shift the lens on how research is conducted. Yosso proposes

highlighting the value of cultural knowledge and wealth that Communities of Color contribute. Yosso (2005) states that researchers, practitioners, and students are still searching for strategies to effectively review the impact of race and racism in U.S. society.

In most of the discussion about education, the focus is on students, yet parent leadership is a significant element connected to student educational attainment. Thus, this study focused on parent leadership to empower social change in public education.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines my positionality as the researcher heading into the study presents the research, design, and articulates the reasoning for a qualitative phenomenological study. Furthermore, I state the purpose of investigating and understanding Latino parent leadership among one advanced group of parents and their sense of community. This study examines how a group of Latino parent leaders evolved into their educational leadership roles and how their experience has shaped their identity. The goal is to collect data critical in understanding Latino parent leaders and their experiences from being involved parents in their children's education to being active parent leaders in an advanced parent leadership group in the Inland Empire. Furthermore, the objective is to capture the parent voice - a voice often neglected in higher education. I seek to understand the influence of parental leadership on their communities. Therefore, to understand the lived experiences of parent leaders, I will address the following questions:

**RQ1:** How do Latino parent leaders describe their leadership experiences in one particular advanced Latino parent leadership group in the Inland Empire?

**RQ2:** What leads Latino parents to serve in leadership roles within one a particular parent leadership group in the Inland Empire?

**RQ3:** In what ways, if any, do Latino parents demonstrate leadership?

#### Researcher's Positionality

I once was told that to understand who I am; I must know where I come from, and, to know where I am going, I must appreciate my present. Those words removed the blindfold over my eyes and allowed me to look deeper into my cultura y raza to understand the struggle that paved the way for me to be where I am today. Marx (1977) reminds us that people are continually constructing their realities, but never entirely on their terms (Madison, 2006). Therefore, “Quien soy yo?” has been a consciousness that I have endured throughout my experiences and analyzed in my college years. Although I have discovered the meaning of consciousness, I continue to battle with myself to remain grounded in my values, what I represent, and what I believe in: “Unless I exist in the eye of others, I come to doubt my existence” (Madison, 2005, p.103).

The lived experiences of any researcher provide a unique lens when doing research. The lens as an English learner, a mother is navigating the school system, and as an educator are the daily lenses, I carry. When multiple lenses collide, you develop a kaleidoscope lens that intersects and provides a unique outlook that allows you to question, inquire and voice things not often sought. The multiple identities are ever-evolving and align with the concept of Chicana M(other) work to define this intersectional lens which allows you to explore spaces often not visible Caballero & Castillo (2019). Therefore, a few years back, at a Latino Education Advocacy Day (LEAD) Conference, a group of Latina

women dressed in suits, navigating an educational conference with such confidence and grace, caught my attention. Their voices were present in the room; they were visible and reminded me of the Latina mothers we see on school campuses and mothers like mine but with a reframed identity. They were parents speaking to educators, administrators, and other parents about Latino students' needs, gaps, and concerns. They were Parent leaders! Their demeanor drove me to question how they developed such high lead levels and the importance of having parents on school campuses. Leading to research on capturing their parent voice and reframing through an asset-based approach the community wealth and prestige of parental leadership. Revisiting my lens on Chicana M(other)work on how valuable their *testimonios* to academia could be on further raising consciousness on the importance of partnerships between the school and home for Latino students success

My position as a researcher is the core of the lens. The cultural experiences, ancestry, and values allow me to battle against society's day-to-day stereotypes, norms, and culture. For that reason, now that I am privileged to write and explore as the "other" in a capitalistic society, my biases and stigmas that carry will enter the field of research. I will be faithful to my voice, and others' struggles denied the right to speak their history, stories, and experiences due to post-colonialism.

I am aware that my identity as a first-generation Chicana and educator will influence this study's process. I have had the luxury of participating in two worlds.

I have taken part in the hybridity of language and culture from both Mexico and the United States. Mi cultura Mexicana carries the rich traditions, music, orals, and language I live with every day. At the same time, my American heritage had allowed me to experience the "The American Dream" that my parents so profoundly searched for and dreamed about when they migrated to the states. My family's oral traditions have allowed me to learn the importance of *familia*, struggles, and *tradiciones* in my life. Therefore, the mestizaje will enable me to code-switch daily and acquire the best of both worlds. I maintain a deep connection to Anzaldua's expression of *Ni de aquí de allá*; I have lived and embraced the Chicano experience. In turn, the lens I carry for this research seeks to capture the navigation of this third space for Latino parents as they seek to find their voice in their students' educational system.

Freire argues that reflection and action are needed to be liberated from a struggle of injustice, and there needs to be a committed involvement in achieving liberation. As I begin to look deeper into my connection with my participants, I begin to have a particular goal: to develop space that will allow for dialogue amongst parents to express and liberate ideas and plans for more vital parent leadership. Their past experiences will drive parents' theoretical lenses. My purpose in this research project is to become sensitive to their dialogue and become aware of the occurring themes discussed, but, above all, I will be ethical. Shram (2007) states that we may not always assume or be capable of committing such offenses. Still, we must instead be humble enough and cautious



enough about the power and privilege we hold as researchers and about our positionality. Therefore, at all times, I must be aware that my research must always carry the participants' best interest.

Parents advocate for their children's education with continuous dedication and passion for bettering themselves in a society that does not embrace them historically. Gloria Anzaldua, a Chicana/Latina/Lesbian writer and poet, has the perfect example of the shame experienced by a bilingual child. In her poem proclaiming her identity and self, *How to Tame a Wild Tongue*, Anzaldua (1999) describes both languages' duality through the description of a serpent's tongue. She explains she lives in a distinct in-between state of both worlds. Although she understands the power of acquiring English, she does not feel that she must lose her roots and culture in the process. She expresses that her split tongue is her identity and pride.

Anzaldua's example describes the dilemmas parents face; they are participants of two distinct identities. Such understanding and discussion will also change an untamed tongue's identity because people will not be forced to acquire one. Concerning the participants, I have a personal interest in this study because, as a teacher who supports parent involvement programs at a variety of school sites, I see the continuous struggles of parents navigating the educational system in hopes of improving their children's education. As an educator and researcher, the deficit mentality is a contentious narrative, often spoken and written. My goal is to add to the literature through an asset-based mentality of the

unspoken community cultural wealth parent leaders contribute. My role of ethics will allow me to maintain a consistent balance as a researcher.

### Research Design

The research on Latino parent leadership is limited. The research collected discusses the discrepancies between what is considered an involved parent vs. a parent leader. However, there is a connection made on the importance of activating and empowering parent voices.

This study's design was qualitative because it sought to make sense of actions, narratives, and the ways they intersect (Glesne, 2011). I sought to make sense of the lived experiences of Latino parent leadership and their evolution into leadership roles. Therefore, the approach was a phenomenology study. The goal of phenomenology is to gain a deeper understanding of a phenomenon. (Van Manen, 1990, p.9) I am seeking to make sense of the Latino parent leadership experiences related to an advanced parent group in the Inland Empire. As the researcher, I researched what all participants have in common, as they relive their experiences on their journey to parent leadership.

Experience is a conscious process, and the lens builds a duality on the importance of capturing parent experiences while also valuing the empowerment process. Therefore, the *testimonio* narrative methodology was used. This allowed the participants to hold the power of their voice from within academia and contribute to higher education on developing parent leadership to be studied from within (Husserl, 1970). This gave Latino parent leaders the opportunity to

describe their experiences and capture their evolution through their testimonios. Because parent voices may bring about understanding and awareness of the parents' evolution as leaders in the advanced parent group, this phenomenological study captures parent perspectives and shares their awareness when it comes to the evolution of parent leaders. Fielding the information first hand allows Latino parent leaders to qualitatively highlight their stories. This design provides an opportunity to explore complex new areas of research in a way that brings forth the perspective of the research participants themselves. The study can provide a narrative not common or yet not captured in research about parent leadership.

The parent voices help understand empowerment by creating awareness of the parents' evolution as leaders in an advanced parent group in the Inland Empire. This study exposed parent perspectives and shared their awareness when it comes to taking the initiative to become parent leaders. Fielding the information first hand allows participants to qualitatively highlight their experiences.

As a researcher, I have an interest in how this group explores parental leadership and in the abundance of community cultural wealth framework to capture their evolution into their roles. This approach allows for a deeper understanding of Latino parents' active leadership role in an advanced parent group in the Inland Empire. This study was proposed to the Institutions Research Board (IRB) and received approval (Appendix A)

## Research Setting

Southern California's Inland Empire is home to one of the fastest-growing Latino communities. Various stakeholders urgently call for action towards a solution-oriented platform to meet the needs of Latino students. As a result, Latino Education Advocacy Day was established in 2008. Through collaborative efforts, an advanced parent leadership group was founded in collaboration with a local Superintendent of Schools county group, Cal State, and a binational organization. The progressive parent leadership group in the Inland Empire is the setting for this phenomenological study. The advanced parent leadership group provides parents with institutional leadership training to become effective change agents in service delivery for their families. The organization also developed processes for parent voice, direct input, advocacy, and impact in schools and communities at local, regional, state, and national levels. As a result, there is a focus on practical strategies to meaningfully engage parents in the planning, implementing, and evaluating successful outcomes for students and families.

## Research Sample

This study's research participants were parents who held a leadership position within the last year in one advanced parent leadership group. Since the research project focuses on Latino parent leadership, the participants need to have a leadership lens. The criteria allowed me as the researcher to gain an understanding of the influences that the parent leadership group played in their leadership capacities. A sampling strategy was used to recruit participants for the

study. Purposeful sampling will select individuals that can purposefully inform about the research problem (Creswell, 2013). This involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are incredibly knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Additionally, purposeful sampling is supported by Bernard (2002) and Spradley (1979), which explain the importance of availability and willingness to participate and communicate experiences and opinions through articulation, expression, and reflective manner using their knowledge and expertise.

Public emails from members in an advanced parent leadership who held a leadership role within the last year were obtained from their participation and association with CSUSB Latino Education Advocacy Day (LEAD) conference. An email was sent (see attached) to participate in the study. For those who liked to participate in the study interviews, I used criterion sampling. The usage of criterion sampling provides rich data relevant to Latino parental leadership's lens within an advanced parent leadership group. Participants must meet the following inclusion criteria:

- Latino parents
- Hold or have held a BPLI leadership position within the past year

I emailed members who met the criteria to participate in the study. Then, I contacted participants who agreed to receive their electronic consent to participate in the interviews through Zoom, which was audio-recorded and transcribed. Consent forms were sent electronically via email for signature. After

participants sent their forms, participants received a follow-up phone call to schedule an interview via Zoom. The Zoom platform allowed participants to attend meetings through video and by phone. Once the meeting was scheduled, Zoom provides a meeting link and a telephone number for the conference to attend by video or by telephone.

### Data Collection

In order to provide a rich understanding of Latino parent leadership within the advanced parent leadership group in the Inland Empire, this research project used three data collection instruments to support triangulation. The primary data sources were 1) semi-structured individual interviews using Zoom, 2) a focus group of all interviewees using Zoom, 3) Review of Archival data, which includes meeting minutes, presentations and any related social media accounts. All documents are publically available. All three data collection methods followed social distancing guidelines to follow COVID 19 regulations. In other words, no in-person contact will be made with participants. Interviews and focus groups will be audio-recorded and transcribed. I further explain the instruments and data analysis process below.

#### Semi-Structured Interviews

The semi-structured interviews yielded insight on previously unheard testimonials that provide narratives of parents who have or are participating in leadership roles within an advanced parent group in the Inland Empire. Interview questions allowed for the narrative of the participants to unfold throughout the

interview, the questions were intentional and based on theory. Glesne (2011) states semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to pursue all interests as the interviews unfold.

All participants were informed that the study was voluntary and that they can remove themselves from the study at any point. Consent forms were provided to remind participants that all information collected will remain confidential. The consent forms also asked for consent to audio record the conversation and to take observational notes during the interviews to use for data analysis. All interviews were conducted using technology to follow health regulations regarding social distancing during the Covid-19 Pandemic. The interview was scheduled via technology at a time that was agreeable to the interviewee.

#### Archival Data

The second source of data was archival data on parental leadership . The data collected captured how the advanced parent leadership group promotes leadership. I reviewed the website, meeting minutes, online archival information, and presentations. Subsequently, I reviewed the mission and vision of the organization as well as meeting agendas and any documents that pertained to the advanced parent leadership group. Analysis of these items yielded an understanding of the elements of leadership the organization promotes. The data was coded with a primary descriptor and organized to support validity and triangulation with the interviews and observations.

### Focus Group

The final data source was a focus group interview. Being part of a social setting allows one to learn firsthand the research participants' actions and correspond to their words. As a result, Expected as well as unexpected relationships are experienced Glesne(, 2011). Focus groups provide a space for the participants to share experiences, recall events and maintain a conversation, providing a rich and range of data. (Johnson, 2002) . All parent leaders interviewed were invited, and audio was recorded via zoom. One focus group was conducted, and the questions were broad. The goal was to capture the voices of the group as a collective to enrich data analysis.

### Data Analysis

Saldana (2016) states it is crucial to define the lens data is analyzed. The lens allows the phenomenon of the study to unfold. Also, the coding method sets the filter for analyzing the data. "To codify is to arrange things in a systematic order, to make something part of a system of classification to categorize" (Saldana, 2016, p. 9). Once semi-structured, archival data and focus group interviews transcriptions occurred, the data sets revealed descriptive patterns. All data were manually coded (Saldana, 2016). "To codify is to arrange things in a systematic order, to make something part of a system of classification to categorize." (Saldana, 2016, page 9). Coding allows patterns related to the phenomenon of the study to unfold. Once all interviews are transcribed with accuracy and archival data is reviewed, a process was used to analyze the data



through descriptive patterns and inductive coding from the participant's words and concepts (Maxwell, 2005). After the data is initially/open-coded, I then coded using Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural wealth framework to categorize the participants' experiences and capture the cultural wealth they bring to Latino parent leadership. Deductive codes include aspirational, linguistic, familial, social, navigational, and resistance. The data collected provided insights on cultural norm activities to unfold methods to increase Latino parent leadership and debunk the deficit mentality set forth historically about Latino parents by delivering the rich data captured through interviews and archival.

Triangulation helps to ensure the trustworthiness of the data (Yin, 2018). Since my research pursues capturing the parent voice, I involved the participants' member reflection, Credibility by remaining true to the data. Dependability by reviewing the data through predetermined themes and reviewing the transcripts multiple times and authenticity through quotes provided validity techniques. Researchers need to guarantee validity through internal validity via established analytic techniques such as pattern matching, external validity through analytical generalization, and reliability through protocols.

### Summary

This chapter outlines the study's purpose and the researcher's positionality to provide context for the research and the researcher's intrinsic interest. The goal was to examine the experience of parent leaders. A description

of the methodology presented how the researcher conducted the study and the data analysis methods that occurred.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

This chapter states the findings of a phenomenological study of how Latino parent leaders' experiences shape their identities. The research findings lead to further understanding of how Latino parents' leadership evolves and their identity influences. Throughout the data collection, the researcher purposefully sought to capture Latino parent leaders' voices to make sense of the phenomenon. The following were the guiding questions leading the research:

**RQ1:** How do Latino parent leaders describe their leadership experiences in one particular Latino parent leadership group in the Inland Empire?

**RQ2:** What leads Latino parents to serve in leadership roles within one particular parent leadership group in the Inland Empire?

**RQ3:** In what ways, if any, do Latino parents demonstrate leadership?

These questions are vital in understanding the elements of parent leadership and the ways parents become leaders. This study's findings provide educational practitioners with meaningful strategies to incorporate leadership opportunities for Latino parents in the educational setting.

#### Participant Demographics

The participants were recruited from a particular advanced parent leadership group in the Inland Empire to contribute to the conversation on parent leadership and further understand how they reached their leadership status.

Demographic data collected through semi-structured interviews reveal all were mothers, Mexican immigrants to this country, middle-aged, primarily Spanish-speakers, and married. One of the differences was their educational schooling. Participants' educational level varied; some participants received an academic education in their home country, while others had very little.

Table 1

*Participant Data*

Interviewee	Gender	Estimated Age	Primary Language
Esperanza	female	35-45	Spanish
Rosario	female	35-45	Spanish
Beatriz	female	35-45	Spanish
Gema	female	35-45	Spanish

**Note:** Pseudonym names given. Data collected was from individual and semi structured interviews June–July 2020.

## Organization and Findings

Research questions guided this study, and the findings are addressed in this section. The interviews and a focus group were transcribed for accuracy, and data reviewed for analysis. Descriptive patterns and manual coding of participants' words were used to code data initially. Next, the data were further coded through Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth framework to categorize participants' experiences and capture the cultural wealth they bring to parent leadership. Deductive codes were

- Aspirational

- Linguistic
- Familial
- Social
- Navigational
- Resistance

As the phenomenology unfolded, interpretation of the interviewees' experiences evolved. Data analysis revealed the stages of parent leadership evolution from learning the system, becoming informed, and transforming into leaders in their community. Therefore, the findings are presented in four different stages; within each step, two overarching themes emerged connected to capital (Yosso, 2005) and stood out above the others. The stage subheadings are the following: *Identity: Encontrar lugar*, *Capacitarme: Semillas de Liderazgo*, *Ganas de Aprender: Cultivando el Aprendizaje*, and *Soy el Vehículo de Mi Comunidad: La Cosecha* (Finding a place, equipping myself, willing to learn, and become the vessel of my community).

#### Identity: Encontrando Lugar

The data revealed the first theme, *Encontrando lugar*. Finding place: Redefining their identity, tells that before the participant's children enter into the k-12 education system, parent leadership begins:

**Esperanza:** Mi vida entera. Yo creo que el liderazgo sano, el liderazgo que nace del corazón, que lo modelamos día a día en nuestra familia.... Entonces el liderazgo creo que debería de ser exigido modelado e

implementado desde el momento que nacen los niños y yo lo hice con mis hijos.

**Gema:** el liderazgo de padre siempre empieza con una motivación y yo creo que para mí el liderazgo de padres es más de corazón

**Rosario:** Mire, a mí el liderazgo del padre ya empieza a detectar, yo creo que como mamá. ¿Qué tiene esta ventaja y esta bendición de tener un hijo en tu vientre, de que un hijo nace, se desarrolla ahí en tu vientre, ya que da la capacidad? Prepara y te da las herramientas para que sea un liderazgo, porque en cierta manera el liderazgo lo toma como mamá.

**Beatriz:** Bueno, yo soy una mamá que llegó a los Estados Unidos en el año 91. Y a raíz de que tuve a mis hijos. Tenía miedo de que fueran rechazados por no hablar inglés. Entonces yo quería que desarrollaran el idioma, pero también quería que no perdieran su lengua materna y empecé a involucrarme desde antes que ingresaran a la escuela. Empecé a ir a tomar unos talleres a la escuela, al distrito escolar "Parenting with a goal" fue el primer taller de padres que tomé. Mi niña tenía dos años y este iba a cumplir dos años y la meta de ese taller era que tomara su taller con su hijo así que yo iba cada clase y fueron veinticuatro clases, dos por semana, y acabé el curso y de ahí me agradó lo que aprendí.

The data collected led me to classify the first theme of the research findings on parent leadership. *Encotrando Lugar* or finding a place speaks about leadership beginning from the heart, motherhood, and identity and realizing how

it differs from their home country. With the guidance of cultural brokers, parents are able to find a place to begin finding the resources and tools to guide their children. The participants revealed how motherhood plays an essential role in their leadership. It is the leadership lens that was activated and redefined through their experiences.

#### Capacitarme: Semillas de Liderazgo

The second theme relates to where the interviewees' parenting journey began. The term *capacitarme* meaning equipping myself trended across the interviews. *Capacitarme* evolves out of continuously asking questions, absorbing knowledge, and entering spaces “sin miedo” (without fear).

*Capacitarme* led this group of mujeres to evolve as mothers and leaders in their community out of need. They felt a need to change the trajectory of their children's future. The need to better their outcomes due to their aspirations, hopes, and dreams for a better tomorrow led them to want more. Their journeys began in their roles as mothers navigating a school system. It started with someone believing in them (cultural brokers) and encouraging them to speak up for their children's needs. Slowly, each one began to enter the first stage of parent leadership. They started to capacitar, which means to equip themselves with the tools they needed to understand the educational system. The women in this study attended various parenting classes and English Language Advisory Committee (ELAC) meetings. They participated in everything they felt would

provide them with the tool to guide their children. The community cultural wealth capitals of Aspirational and Navigational were prominent in this section.

### Aspirations for Their Children

The participants shared wanting more for their children. They were afraid of not helping their children in their educational journey and seeing their children not succeed. They know the importance of education and have high hopes for their children's educational experience. They shared that, being immigrant mothers, they aspired for more for their children. Although language was a barrier, the interviewees shared the importance of taking the first step of learning the educational system. As each of the participants was asked what led them to be where they are today, they all mentioned a need or a want to see their children succeed. Participants described the journey as a learning experience in hand with their children and learning alongside them to better support them from the preceding years to college.

**Esperanza:** *Cuando llegué a este país por primera vez, llevé a mi hijo a la escuela. Me daba mucho miedo, mucho miedo entrar a la escuela porque no sabía el idioma, no sabía cómo se manejaba el sistema educativo de los Estados Unidos y desconocía completamente a qué me iba a estar enfrentando yo al llegar a este país. Realmente, cuando llegué al preescolar de mi hijo me dio mucho gusto ver que la maestra nos recibió. Hablaba mi idioma y me dijo yo le dije tengo muchos nervios. No sé si*



*estoy más nerviosa que mi hijo, porque no sé cómo lo voy a poder ayudar. Entonces ella me dijo venga a las clases que tenemos para padres, venga a los comités de ELAC y DELAC y para mí todo eso era nuevo.*

Esperanza's experience is typical of many immigrant families. They want to be involved in supporting their children's educational careers, but they do not have the proper tools to do so. Attending classes allowed Esperanza to "capacitarme" to gain valuable tools. With many constant barriers and hopes for a better future, parents like Esperanza leap of faith in the hopes of learning. Furthermore, Rosario explains what led her to want more for her children:

**Rosario:** *Nace mi hijo y en el 2000 me parece que regresó a mi país por situaciones económicas, porque estaba indocumentada en este país. Decido regresar a mi país de nuevo al estado de Colima. Ya cuando vuelvo a regresar ya mi niño estaba próximo para entrar al preescolar y es ahí donde empieza mi mi carrera y mi inicio en el involucramiento en la escuela. Aquere que ahora. ¿Cuál fue el principal objetivo antes de que mi hijo entrara al preescolar? Fue que mi hijo traía problemas de lenguaje.*

Rosario shared her prime objective was to begin her career as a parent leader to support her child's language needs.

Participants shared similar experiences regarding the barriers their children would face. Beatriz shared how scared she was that her children would not fit in and knew she wanted to be involved.

**Beatriz:** *Bueno, yo soy una mamá que llegó a los Estados Unidos del año 91. Y a raíz de que tuve a mis hijos. Tenía miedo de que fueran rechazados por no hablar inglés. Entonces yo quería que desarrollaran el idioma, pero también quería que no perdieran su lengua materna y empecé a involucrarme desde antes que ingresaran a la escuela gracias a una persona que me invitó a ir a tomar unos talleres.*

Being aware of the barriers, Gema shared having a child with special needs who was also an English learner led her into the first stage of "Capacitarme." She searched and gained tools to support her children in the educational system knowing that her child's needs were different.

**Gema:** *Llegué a Estados Unidos hace 16 años, casi 17 años. Mis hijos fueron aprendices del idioma inglés. Tengo un niño con necesidades especiales y esos dos factores, los aprendices de inglés y un niño con necesidades especiales, fue lo que casi me empujó a tomar liderazgo, porque desafortunadamente el idioma fue una barrera muy grande para mí, para poder integrarme a lo que era el sistema educativo a todos.*

Each of the participants aspired for her children to succeed, but, most importantly, there was a need to understand how they could help their children achieve their dreams and hopes while facing fear their children would feel isolated due to barriers. Each one entered unknown spaces. Each one shared that understanding how to navigate the educational system was vital.

### Navigating Resources to Understand the Educational System

Maneuvering through the educational system was not easy. The women discussed fear, the unknown, and learning new tools to support their children's educational journeys. Throughout the interviews, a common theme was someone guiding, believing, or empowering them to begin navigating this first stage. Individuals who take on being a bridge or advocate on behalf of individuals or groups are cultural brokers (Jezewski & Sotnik 2001). Cultural brokers assist with the transfer of cultural knowledge for improving communication, practice, or relationships. Throughout the interviews, many teachers, administrators, and educators were mentioned as individuals who advocated or pushed participants to invest in equipping themselves with the tools to begin navigating the educational system to support their children's success.

**Esperanza:** *Realmente, cuando yo llegué al preescolar de mi hijo me dio mucho gusto ver que la maestra nos recibió. Hablaba mi idioma y me dijo yo le dije tengo muchos nervios. No sé si estoy más nerviosa que mi hijo, porque no sé cómo lo voy a poder ayudar. Entonces ella me dijo venga a las clases que tenemos para padres, venga a los comités de ELAC y DELAC y para mí todo eso era nuevo. Entonces realmente ahí empezó mi navegador para poder aprender a navegar el sistema de educación y poder orientar un poquito a mis hijos. Aunque el inglés no es mi fuerte, no hablo el inglés bien lo entiendo, pero es ahí donde inició mi voluntariado desde que mis hijos estaban en preescolar hasta el día de hoy.*

In Esperanza's case, the teacher transferred power to her and empowered her to begin navigating and understanding the tools available to help her child. Rosario shares the following:

**Rosario:** *Saber que mi hijo tendría que ir a la escuela y no sabía cómo, cómo lo iba a hacer, cómo él iba a trabajar para eso si no se podía comunicar bien. Entonces este fue el primer contacto de un papá, de una mamá que conocía más o menos que el sistema que ayudó a otro padre, a mí como madre. Entonces empecé a pedir cita. Desafortunadamente, por alguna razón hubo un malentendido cuando yo voy a registrar a mi hijo al preescolar y le comenté a su maestra preocupada. Entonces, gracias a esta maestra también se movió más rápido el proceso. Mi hijo entra a terapia, afortunadamente de la mano, empezando el año escolar, así que ahí empieza mi involucramiento, porque el niño de 4 años. Empezaba a tomar las terapias y estaba sumamente asustado porque no tenía relación con nadie extraño que no fuera con la familia y conmigo. Así fue que empecé a ir a la escuela. Estaba presente con él. Tenía que estar presente en la terapia y ahí fue paso a paso, como yo me fui involucrando en darme cuenta que estaba ya dando pasos de involucramiento en la educación del hijo. Y para estos creo en el 2006 si no me equivoco, a través de la escuela llega un proyecto que se llamaba INSPIRE. Para informar y capacitar a los padres sobre este proyecto novedoso de preparación como tipo universidad dos años desde que*

*empezaron, recuerdo aproximadamente que más de 40 padres donde mi hijo estudiaba y así fue un proceso de preparación de clases.*

Rosario without knowing was “Capacitando ” through various professional development opportunities. Attending parent involvement programs and establishing a network allowed Rosario to gain multiple opportunities to network with other parents and feel empowered. Parents with lived experiences also become cultural brokers sharing the knowledge they gained. Beatriz also shared that someone in her lived experiences supported her in equipping herself with the tools she needed.

**Beatriz:** *En una ocasión, donde mis hijos iniciaron su kindergarten hoy la directora me invitó que quería ser parte de representar a los niños de Kindergarten del distrito y que tenía que ir a unas juntas. Yo le dije okay, pero ni pregunté de qué se trataba ni nada. Entonces empecé a ir y era una vez por mes y pues. Yo miré que había información muy interesante. Así fue. Así empezó todo. Y desde ahí para adelante siempre todo lo que he hecho ha sido empecé por mis hijos.*

School administrators like in the case of Beatriz have the power to empower parents. A small act of invitation lead this mother to begin navigating the unknown spaces and initiate leadership with the tools to “capacitarme” or equipping herself.

**Gema:** *Cuando estuve en la Junta de ELAC, afortunadamente, nada más éramos tres padres y este me acuerdo muy bien de La Señora B. Si no la*

*recuerdo, quizás ella. Ella fue la que dirigió la reunión y ella fue la que nos quería. Quería armar el comité del ELAC en la escuela. Y nos dijo que quien quería, pues obviamente, pues como no se daba ni de qué se trataba y no teníamos ni idea de qué significaba ser representante de un ELAC, pues nadie quiso. Lo que a mí más me impactó fue cuando ella nos dijo "Pues si nadie quiere es que alguien más va a tomar la decisión por sus hijos." Entonces eso fue lo que a mí sí me llegó, porque dije ah, o no, si hoy yo voy a tomar decisiones y decisiones buenas o malas, voy a ser yo. Entonces yo creo que utilizó la psicología adecuada conmigo, por lo menos porque a mí sí me impactó esas palabras. Y desde entonces yo decidí que sí, que yo iba a tomar el liderazgo y que iba tomar el liderazgo para beneficio de mis hijos primero.*

Gema's cultural broker was La Señora B., a woman who spoke to the parents about what it meant not to be involved. La Señora B. said that not being involved gave up the power to make decisions for their children. That comment led to Gema's interest and initiation into wanting to be the one to make decisions for her children and activate her voice for her child's needs.

Through the lens of community cultural wealth, in the second theme of "Capacitarme," the community cultural capitals of aspirations and navigational were pertinent. The interviewees revealed goals, dreams, and struggles while doing their best to be there for their children's educational experiences. Equipping themselves through various classes like Project to Inspire, ELACs,

DELACs, and CABE led them to want more and learn more. Each one of the participants gained confidence by learning the appropriate tools to teach.

#### Ganas de Aprender: Cultivando el Aprendizaje

The data revealed the third theme of “Ganas de Aprender,” which translates into an eagerness to learn. The interviews, focus groups, and archival data showed that they are eager to learn more and question more once parents begin to understand the educational system. The fear diminished, and with the appropriate tools, the women started to gain confidence. Their voices revealed the importance of establishing leadership and being a leader.

#### *Linguistic Capital*

All interviewees discussed the knowledge they gained gave them the confidence to lead at home and in their community. The data revealed community cultural wealth of linguistic capital is an essential component to becoming a leader in theme three. By gaining Spanish and sharing these tools with their community in Spanish, the women all felt a responsibility to connect and share the information with other parents.

**Esperanza:** *Yo le podría decir con mucha humildad que a lo largo de sus 17 años le podría decir que son muchos los padres que hemos sembrado esa semilla de liderazgo y que el día de hoy son grandes líderes de la comunidad. Y le podría mencionar, sin dudarlo, 20/30 nombres de padres que una vez que nosotros hemos dado los talleres, que hablamos de familia, familia, que hablamos de cómo de padre a padre tiene un efecto*

*mayor, cuando hay un padre presente que no pertenece a la institución, sino que estamos hablando de padre a padre, tiene un impacto positivo y yo creo que hemos impactado o impactado a muchas mujeres y hombres que el día de hoy siguen sirviendo a la comunidad y que estamos una vez.*

As defined, the third theme of participants' leadership development was gaining learning to use adequate tools. The tools acquired by the parent leaders are shared throughout the community as a resource for other parents navigating. Esperanza revealed how, once the device is achieved, one not just thinking about one's children. The individual begins to think about the children of other members of your community. The tools gained allow her to make connections to the community through the language capital she established. The communication to lead increased Esperanza's leadership.

**Beatriz:** *Nosotros seguimos haciendo lo que se necesita hacer. Creo que nosotros tenemos la fortuna de ver más directamente cuáles son las necesidades de nuestra comunidad, porque los padres de padre a padre, los padres, hablamos en más confianza. Ellos claramente lo que necesitamos. A veces las escuelas o los administradores maestros no se enteran de lo que necesita la comunidad porque no hay confianza todavía. Y el involucramiento familiar y el trabajo en sociedad en el ámbito familiar tienen mucho que ver desarrollar la confianza. Así es que, como ahorita, por ejemplo, el hobby es una situación sumamente diferente, algo*



*que nunca habíamos visto. Yo sigo trabajando en dar información a los padres.*

Beatriz recognized that, as her leadership developed throughout her journey, she could connect with other parents. Through linguistic capital, she established relationships with “confianza,” or trust, because of factors she had in common with other parents. Her cross-cultural awareness of her community allowed Beatriz to begin to establish herself as a leader. The language gained from continuous participation in conferences, meetings, and communicating with staff gave her the language capital to navigate spaces typically not guided by parents. Furthermore, Rosario presented her experience.

**Rosario:** *En lo personal las motivaciones son saber que lo poco que yo sé es útil para las familias, para los niños, para los estudiantes. Y que el conocimiento que yo fuera adquiriendo y lo poco que yo pudiera dar crea un impacto en un niño, en un estudiante y en una familia y en un padre que tenía miedo a acercarse e involucrarse por la barrera del idioma o simplemente por desconocimiento.*

Rosario recognized the tools she was equipping herself through various professional development, meetings and committees provided advantages with her language capital. She acquired the language of how the educational system worked, attended various workshops, and realized the value of the information she was gaining. In turn, it motivated her to make a difference with those who

spoke her language. The result of feeling like she was making an impact led her to want more.

**Gema:** *Si un padre involucrado no toma decisiones, un padre involucrado nada más toma información, lo lleva a su casa. Y trabaja en su casa. Un padre líder toma la información y la lleva a la comunidad. La lleva a otras familias. Ese es un padre líder, el que puede dar todos sus conocimientos y todo su apoyo a otras familias para que crezcan también. Tenemos una red de apoyos, yo tengo recursos ahorita de comida, entonces yo les llamo a esos 20 padres líderes y les digo necesitamos decir que hay comida en este lugar y necesito lista de la gente que sepan qué más necesidad tienen sus padres líderes me llaman a mí y yo tengo las listas, recogemos la comida y la distribuimos entonces a mucha gente. Creo que un buen líder siempre lo seguimos. Un liderazgo positivo siempre se sigue y se duplica. Entonces un network que si yo le hablara de cuántas personas somos, pues estamos conectadas en cuestión de minutos o de una hora por no ser tan tan exagerados. Estamos en conexión con más de 250 personas.*

Gema recognized the language capital gained from attending multiple training sessions and called out what she determined to be a parent leader. She earned linguistic capital as she used the linguistic repertoires she learned to share tools. Parent leadership goes beyond benefiting one's children to sharing the knowledge gained so others can benefit.

The participants all were Spanish-speakers. The women leveraged their knowledge and capital so that their community could also have access. Stage three as defined through the data analysis, was about wanting to learn more. The learning and grasping of information served a greater purpose and yielded *confianza* also known as confidence.

#### Resistance to Reinforcing Stereotypes

Parents go from being involved to becoming active parent leaders. The results were that the participants' professional development created awareness about the statistics, stigma, and cultures around Latino students and parents. Their continuous participation developed understanding of the role parents play in their students' education. Therefore, the theme of resistance in breaking generational stigma and trajectories for their children was prevalent. The participants equipped themselves with the tools to present their voices in spaces where parents voice is needed. For example, the participants presented at local conferences became presidents of various school site committees. They took on leadership roles in their school district and community using what they knew about the data regarding English learners. They spoke up and began to question practices while providing opportunities for solutions. The following sections honor their voice in capturing how important it is to ensure parent leaders more from Stage two to Stage three of wanting more and having "Ganas de Aprender."

**Esperanza:** *Ha participado en un punto en su carrera de padre líder, ha participado en diferentes comités, casi en todos los comités que existen*

*en la escuela, que tienen un impacto directo para los estudiantes, como ELAC DELAC, GATE, PTA, LCAP todo eso. El mayor reto es ver las injusticias que se cometen cuando los padres no sabemos nuestros derechos y creo que como padres líderes nuestra responsabilidad es enseñarles los derechos que tienen como padres en este país.*

Esperanza shared that her continuous involvement led her to recognize injustices occurring in schools and felt that, as parent leaders, the role is always to inform parents of their educational rights. She gained resistance capital as she ensured information did not stay just with her. Esperanza wanted all stakeholders to become aware. While Beatriz shared the knowledge she gained because she wanted to learn more than led her to new projects.

**Beatriz:** *Y desde ahí para adelante siempre todo lo que he hecho ha sido empecé por mis hijos y empecé a involucrarme como por mis hijos. Y después me di cuenta que no nada más eran mis hijos, que mis hijos estaban creciendo. Una posibilidad que yo quería que esos papás de esos niños también supieran las cosas que yo estaba aprendiendo para que creáramos una comunidad más fuerte a través del conocimiento. Así es que empecé a hacer parte de los comités de padres de ELAC y DELAC School Site Council después, como ya aprende uno a esos niveles y en el distrito, ¿siempre hay alguien que está trabajando en materia de cómo crecer el involucramiento familiar, como el hábito familiar en el un distrito escolar en el sur de California me invitaron a ser parte de*

*un comité que se llama Action Team for Partnership (ATP) se abrevia igual y ahí apoya a preguntar de qué se trata? ¿Cuál es la meta? Ya sabía que tenía que preguntar y este sí, también fui parte de eso Y de ahí en adelante llevo alrededor de 17 años de involucramiento familiar. Uno de esos proyectos que fue en el distrito escolar desarrollamos proyecto para implementar, que se llama Project to Inspire, que hasta el día de hoy existe, pertenece a CAFE California Association for Bilingual Education. Este taller en específico que desarrolla desde el principio hasta el final en materia de entender el sistema educacional de Estados Unidos, que era precisamente lo que yo estaba buscando, estaba tratando de entender el sistema y también estaba yo buscando que más padres como yo entiéramos mejor el sistema para poder navegarlo y poder abogar más efectivamente por nuestros hijos, que tuvieran los servicios, que tuvieran los recursos, que hubiese más entendimiento entre padres y maestros. Y en ese taller de proyectos fallidos nos enseñaron la importancia de ver el involucramiento familiar como una sociedad, como trabajar en sociedad. Partnership y así que de ahí empezamos a entender los tipos de exámenes que los niños toman en la escuela. La importancia del involucramiento familiar. Cómo aprenden los niños y cómo son capaces de tener el poder de reciclarse. No solo ellos, sino sus familias. Es que la importancia de ir de conocer el sistema gubernamental e ir al éxito escolar al board no sólo a pedir, pero también a darle las gracias*

*cuando vemos que algo está funcionando bien en el sistema y que es importante que nosotros también reconozcamos que hay muchas cosas que cambiar, pero también hay muchas cosas buenas que están pasando y hay personas que están yendo más allá de lo que debieran de ir para poder proveer de mejor educación a nuestros hijos. Así es que es un proyecto muy amplio que yo siempre voy a pasar, le recomendaron, porque gracias a este proyecto es que nosotros ahora estamos donde estamos.*

Beatriz's knowledge allowed her to broaden her perspective around how school districts function and begin to advocate for other parents to participate. Resistance capital pertains to acquiring skills. The participants gained the skills to better understand. They had a desire for more. One keyword mentioned was "partnership." Beatriz realized that a partnership is needed between the school districts and parents. The new knowledge provided confidence to advocate and want more. Gema shared that learning new knowledge led her to lead her own space for parents who wanted to learn more about special education needs. Parents lead the space for parents in Spanish.

**Gema:** *Alguien que fue muy importante en el desarrollo de mi liderazgo fue La Señora N, porque ella creyó mucho en nosotros como padres o como padres, que teníamos un potencial y que los podíamos desarrollar. Y nos empezó a capacitar, nos mandó a talleres, nos mandó talleres de liderazgo, buscó lo que era proyecto Inspire para nosotros, tomamos el*

nivel 1 y el nivel 2. Desafortunadamente ya no hubo fondos para un nivel 3, pero en todas las oportunidades que ella tenía involucramos involucró eso y eso nos ayudó a crecer mucho, a crecer mucho como líderes y a crecer mucho en conocimiento. Y, por otra parte, pues yo también empecé a desarrollarme en el área de educación especial, pero tengo que las dos cosas fueron casi al mismo tiempo. Decidí formar un grupo de apoyo para padres con niños con necesidades especiales, porque lo que yo estaba pasando de falta de información, de no saber los derechos de la educación de mi hijo, de todas las trabas que me está enfrentando, yo no era la única. Entonces me empecé a involucrar con más personas, empecé a ir a grupos de apoyo, pero los grupos de apoyo que había solo hablaban inglés con mi inglés muy limitado, pues de todos modos me iba. Salía toda frustrada, ¿verdad? Pero de todo lo que escuchaba algo me traía. Entonces fue cuando dije Bueno, si estoy en esta situación, no soy la única, no soy la única. Y si desafortunadamente no era la única. Cuando empecé a abrir el grupo de apoyo, empezaron a llegar padres de habla hispana y todos estamos en la misma situación, entonces empezamos a buscar apoyo de personas que nos dieran talleres, que hablaran español y que no nos cobraran verdad, porque es un grupo de apoyo, no tiene dinero. Nos reunimos en casas este por muchos años, por muchos años. Estuvimos en una casa y luego en otra casa, donde nos daban básicamente posada. Ahí es donde nos reunimos y después

*nos dieron un lugar en Riverside que yo decidí ir a Riverside hoy porque muchas de las familias que estaban en mi grupo. Entonces dije bueno, pues si ellos no pueden venir para acá, pues entonces nosotros no vamos a tener que mover para allá. Y así es como hemos estado.*

Gema established a space for parents of children with special needs. The knowledge she has gained demonstrated leadership in wanting to learn more and, above all, create a space to share new knowledge for parents on how to support their child with special needs better. The theme of resistance pertains to how advocating for one needs is a tool gained. Rosario was able to present to parents and establish a space for parents on her campus.

**Rosario:** *Inmediatamente, al estarme preparando, empezaban a cualquier idea que la propuesta con mi maestra de hacer una presentación ante los maestros de la escuela era tal la emoción y las ganas de ayudar, y cuando fui descubriendo el sistema, entonces nos preparamos para prácticamente yo tomé la iniciativa de preparar un ppt para presentar los objetivos a los maestros. Si emocionada me dijo que le parece una excelente idea, así que dimos marcha antes de graduarme. Efectivamente llevamos esta presentación en octubre. Recuerdo a los maestros. Los maestros estaban totalmente impactados, sorprendidos, contentos, que no podían creer que un grupo de padres hablantes del español, éramos padres que hablábamos español diéramos una presentación. Así que fue algo, una experiencia muy bonita que fue de los*



*nichos de involucramiento. Y ahí empezó donde ya se estableció un centro de padres inclusive, siendo todavía el proyecto por uno de los logros más hermosos de este proyecto que gracias al director a ese deseo de involucrar padres muy rápido, muy rápido, estableció el centro padre que sin no equivocarme puedo decir que me parece que fue el primer centro de padres que se abrió. Desde ahí yo no me di cuenta que yo ya llevaba un involucramiento, que ya después, con la preparación de los talleres, ya me estoy dando cuenta. Es ser un padre involucrado, porque hasta en estos momentos era una mamá nada más preocupada por su pequeño hijo que tareas, problemas de lenguaje, que había la barrera del idioma.*

The participants' experiences provided evidence that, when knowledge is gained, awareness of needs is exposed. Each of these women shared the importance of the tools gained and slowly realized their leadership was developing. The other important factor in this stage is cultural brokers' role in transmitting knowledge, empowering, leading, and offering parent's spaces. This role, in turn, establishes connections to build leadership with parents. Cultural brokers are essential, and they vary from administrators to educators to district personnel. They transfer power to empower parents.

#### Soy el Vehículo de Mi Comunidad: La Cosecha

This data revealed the fourth theme of empowerment and understood both parent leadership and the partnerships needed to navigate school with their

children. This study sought to understand how parents build as leaders and, most importantly, what led them to this final stage. The two major themes were familial and social capital. Their families, breaking generational barriers and witnessing the change that evolves led to these women's hearts and dedication for their family and community. The title of this stage, "Soy el Vehiculo de mi Comunidad" was strategically selected because the women spoke about understanding there was a need beyond just their families. They went from using cultural brokers to become brokers. Further analysis revealed findings consistent with the different types of capital. Examples of Familial and Social capital, were evident in this section. Familial capital is the networks of community and family that bring wealth to their leadership. Social Capital is tapping into their social contacts to receive their information and resources they needed. Below are excerpts from participants' narratives

#### Familial Capital

The research questions for this study are designed to understand how parents reach a high level of capacity. The data revealed this capacity building begins due to the love of their children and family. The data showed familial, cultural capital as a central component in how participants began, evolved, and established leadership. Each one brought up motherhood and their children as critical factors. Their voice captures the essential elements that spark leadership at home and evolve due to familial needs.

**Esperanza:** *El liderazgo es tan esencial en este tiempo y más si es positivo, porque nos va a llevar a generar grandes cambios en todos los aspectos, en el aspecto de la educación, pero sobre todo el liderazgo empieza en la familia. Si yo soy un buen líder en mi familia y sé reconocer mis errores y reconocer mis dones, entonces sé que los voy a poder compartir porque tengo esas dos partes. Entonces el liderazgo creo que debería de ser exigido modelado e implementado desde el momento que nacen los niños y yo lo hice con mis hijos. Mis hijos ahora participan activamente en ayudar, en estar presentes donde hay necesidad. Yo le puedo decir que cuando los padres estamos informados e involucrados, el ambiente en casa. y más cuando está relacionado con educación, con servir a la comunidad, porque entonces uno tiene más temas de conversación con ellos.*

Esperanza's involvement as a leader transferred to her children becoming active members of their community. The bonds established allowed her to bring her children as part of the journey and see how what she learned leads others.

Furthermore, she established a network with her parents.

**Esperanza:** *Yo le podría decir con mucha humildad que a lo largo de sus 17 años le podría decir que son muchos los padres que hemos sembrado esa semilla de liderazgo y que el día de hoy son grandes líderes de la comunidad. Y le podría mencionar, sin dudarle, 20/30 nombres de padres que una vez que nosotros hemos dado los talleres, que hablamos de*

*familia, familia, que hablamos de cómo de padre a padre tiene un efecto mayor, cuando hay un padre presente que no pertenece a la institución, sino que estamos hablando de padre a padre, tiene un impacto positivo y yo creo que hemos impactado o impactado a muchas mujeres y hombres que el día de hoy siguen sirviendo a la comunidad y que estamos una vez.*

Esperanza is relatable, so she became a cultural broker for her community. She established bonds and trust because of the knowledge and resources she shared with her community. Her impact comes after 17 years of involvement. This stage of “vehículo de mi comunidad” is just that. She is a resource and proud to be that. She established connections as a parent that no school district can replicate. As a result, the link becomes an investment in parent leadership reaps the benefits. The relationships found a sense of trust to transmit and reach out. Beatriz explains how this looks through her experiences.

**Beatriz:** *Nada más haber tomado talleres de cómo ayudar a tus hijos a que no hagan berrinches, cómo enseñarles que pueden expresar sus emociones, pero de una manera más propia. En una ocasión, en la escuela M, donde mis hijos iniciaron su kindergarten, la directora me invitó que quería ser parte de representar a los niños de Kindergarten del distrito y que tenía que ir a unas juntas. Yo le dije okay, pero ni pregunté de qué se trataba ni nada. Entonces empecé a ir y era una vez por mes y pues no. Yo miré que había información muy interesante. Así fue. Así*

*empezó todo. Y desde ahí para adelante siempre todo lo que he hecho ha sido empecé por mis hijos y empecé a involucrarme como por mis hijos. Y después me di cuenta que no nada más eran mis hijos, que mis hijos estaban creciendo. Una posibilidad que yo quería que esos papás de esos niños también supieran las cosas que yo estaba aprendiendo para que creáramos una comunidad más fuerte a través del conocimiento.*

Beatriz started her journey because of her children and realized that there was a need in her community. That led her to establish leadership but, most importantly, establish a stronger community and family. She has been an essential cultural broker. Her familial capital became a lifeline for many.

**Beatriz:** *La necesidad. Lo que le mencionaba hace un rato que uno conversa con los padres día a día. Nosotros recibimos llamadas a veces hasta muy tarde, resolviendo a la gente, pidiendo resolver ciertas necesidades. Desde el sepelio y no contar con nadie para enterrar a su familiar. Por ejemplo, hasta violencia doméstica, búsqueda de refugio y pérdida de un muchacho que no ha regresado a casa. Y todas esas cosas son las que me motivaron a decir yo tengo que saber más.*

Beatriz's experiences are prevalent in that familial capital is established and transmitted when the community recognizes resources are available. Gema also discussed how familial capital is essential.

**Gema:** *el liderazgo de padre siempre empieza con una motivación y yo creo que para mí el liderazgo de padres es más de corazón, porque*

*siempre sale por una necesidad o una necesidad de sacar algo adelante y por lo regular un liderazgo de padres bien involucrado, porque quieres lo mejor para tus hijos, porque quieres que tus hijos tengan lo mejor y de ahí nace el liderazgo de padres. De ahí tú tomas acción. Para poder ayudar a tus hijos a salir adelante y creo que es el liderazgo más honesto, porque porque tiene un objetivo que no es para tu propio beneficio, que no es para para salir en la foto, es para que te den premios ni nada de eso, sino que es para que tus hijos puedan tener lo mejor. A lo mejor a lo mejor no la vida que tenéis. Tú tuviste a la mejor las opciones que tú no tuviste que ellos puedan tener eso y que tengan oportunidades. Y la única manera que yo he visto que ha funcionado es cuando uno toma acción y toma un liderazgo en lo que está haciendo. Y para empezar, pues tienes que tener el liderazgo en tu familia para poder este, para poder desarrollar porque no puedes. No puedes ser líder afuera si en tu casa no eres líder y para mí eso es ser un liderazgo de padres. Hoy el liderazgo de padres debe nacer del corazón y debe de tener el propósito de sacar a tus hijos adelante y luego de querer sacar a la comunidad adelante.*

Gemas explained that her child is her school and her child with special needs led her to be where she is. Born of a need to see her child succeed, her leadership transmitted to her community. Parent leadership evolves at home. Furthermore, Gema created a family with many parents like her navigating an English learner special needs child. By creating a parent group of her own, she transferred her

knowledge and brought new knowledge to the table. Most importantly, she mentioned the autonomy of meeting the language and unique needs of children in her community.

**Gema:** *Salía toda frustrada, verdad? Pero de todo lo que escuchaba algo me traía. Entonces fue cuando dije Bueno, si estoy en esta situación, no soy la única, no soy la única. Y si desafortunadamente no era la única. Cuando empecé abrir el grupo de apoyo, empezaron a llegar padres de habla hispana y todos estamos en la misma situación, entonces empezamos a buscar apoyo de personas que nos dieran talleres, que hablaran español y que no nos cobraran verdad, porque es un grupo de apoyo, no tiene dinero. Nos reunimos en casas este por muchos años, por muchos años. Estuvimos en una casa y luego en otra casa, donde nos daban básicamente posada. Y así es como hemos estado. Este es un grupo que ya tiene 12 años formado. El grupo se llama Padres con Poder. Y este y como dijo a la par, he llevado el liderazgo en lo que es la comunidad con necesidades especiales y también el liderazgo en lo que es a padres con niños aprendices del idioma inglés.*

Establishing her familial capital led her to continue the work in her community.

Gema was essential in securing a voice for parents with special needs and breaking the language barrier. Continuing the work, Rosario reflected on her family capital.

**Rosario:** *Mire, a mí el liderazgo del padre ya empieza a detectar, yo creo que como mamá. ¿Qué tiene esta ventaja y esta bendición de tener un hijo en tu vientre, de que un hijo nace, se desarrolla ahí en tu vientre, ya que da la capacidad? Prepara y te da las herramientas para que sea un liderazgo, porque en cierta manera el liderazgo lo toma como mamá. Cuando aboga, cuando tomas delantera inclusive de barrera perimido, tomas estrategias, tiendas, buscando caminos y alternativas para salir adelante. Sé que el liderazgo para mí casa desde la misma persona ya lleva a que cambie despacio. Entonces aquí estamos hablando de escuela elemental, pues toma la iniciativa tomar compromiso, emplear tus valores, emplear tus metas, tus sueños. ¿Cuál es tu visión? ¿Qué es lo que tú quieres entonces? Es ahí donde yo considero el liderazgo de toda persona, porque para mí toda persona tiene un liderazgo nada más que en diferentes áreas.*

The need to move forward as a mother led Rosario into many unknown spaces to provide her with the tools to succeed. In turn, she presented in various conferences, established a parent center where familial tools are shared, and reflected on what leadership meant.

**Rosario:** *Yo estaba representando a mi comunidad hispana, estaba representando a mi gente y ya no me daba cuenta hasta donde yo vi caminando, porque yo ya había pasado de comités en mi escuela de proyectos, ayudando a mi escuela en Alimentaria, en un Middle School*



*camino también y a un nivel distrito. Pero yo entre mi emoción de involucramiento, entre mi emoción de servicio nunca me detuve hasta en ese momento a ver el trabajo y el camino que yo estaba abriendo y el ejemplo que yo también estaba viendo dando y el impacto que estaba creando en mi comunidad también.*

Rosario's familial capital came from her own family and the ones created through parent groups. Her leadership involvement reflected a new theme that emerged through data analysis. Social capital is developed because of continuous involvement.

### Social Capital

The adversities participants faced led them to tap into their networks to support their community's needs. Societal capital was a theme that came through in participants' interview responses. Their participation in a particular committee in the Inland Empire provided them with advanced leadership skills. As a result, they distributed the resources as the "vehículo para su comunidad," the vehicle for their community leveraging their social capital.

**Esperanza:** *Cada día un nuevo reto, cada día un nuevo aprendizaje. Cada día a mejorar y mejorar porque nos dan clases de cómo hablar, de cómo dirigirnos, de cómo vestirnos, de cómo llevar todo lo que son los récords de los estatutos. Es increíble. Cada día me veo con un crecimiento y una responsabilidad mayor cuando tengo camiseta puesta, porque estamos representando a muchos padres. Regularmente se*

*consiguen personas dentro del condado que si, por ejemplo, tenemos problemas que no sabemos mucho la tecnología, entonces La Señora M busca alguna persona profesional del condado y nos dan tecnología. Si necesitamos saber qué es, por ejemplo, qué dones tenemos cada uno o cómo, cómo trabajamos nos traen una nos regalaron un libro y nos hicieron una encuesta de cuáles son nuestros dones y cuáles son los puntos más bajos. Y entonces ahí empezamos a trabajar. Todas esas capacitaciones se las provee el comité, La Señora M o El Señor M. Todas las capacitaciones nos las dan ellos día a día para poder lidiar con todo lo que conlleva tener un liderazgo avanzado.*

Esperanza shared her leadership skills were strengthened by the networking in her committee. The tools gained will allow them to serve her community. She provided examples of using her capital to intervene and equip parents with the tools to navigate their students' educational journeys.

**Esperanza:** *Ustedes ya lucharon por los derechos de sus hijos. Vaya y haga eso. Si no resultaba, haga esto y si no, entonces me llama. Entonces les enseño el proceso y cuando ya no está la atención, entonces hablamos directamente y cada día recibo casos. Hasta la fecha y a mis hijos está en la universidad, pero ya cada día recibo todavía cómo puedo hacer esto. No me hacen caso en esto. ¿Qué puedo hacer en aquello? Es así como las copas y como pasa . Me siento muy bendecida cuando veo que un joven tiene éxito, cuando veo que por la intervención*

*mínima que tuvo ese chico se pudo graduar y que ahora lo veo en la calle sonríe y pueden seguir sus metas y como él muchos, le podría mencionar miles de nombres y casos. Cuando me ven me dan ese abrazo las familias cuando hay un papel, una aplicación que no pueden llenar cualquier cosa, entonces es ahí donde entramos nosotros, cualquier tipo de recurso. Tuve una llamada a las tres y media de la mañana que murió su hijo de un señor en su casa y no sabían legalmente que debían hacer. Estaban con el dolor, con el pesar y todo, y acudimos a ayudarlos. Osea, el liderazgo no es solo que me tomen fotos en el comité y que digan mirá, me dieron un reconocimiento el liderazgo, como le dije cuando se habla de liderazgo tenemos que hablar de honradez, de lealtad, de honestidad, de pasión y de ganas de servicio. Eso para mí es el liderazgo.*

*Rosario further tapped into social capital and explained how her parental leadership led her child to be “seen,” recognized, and known on campus. It also allowed her to provide solutions at various school meetings. Social capital was established through networking and the resources established.*

**Rosario:** El director que conoce, a mi involucramiento en mis proyectos, de lo que yo estaba viendo, la escuela y pues también a mi hijo el comportamiento, porque esta es una de las diferencias que cuando tú te involucras, cuando tú tomas liderazgo en la escuela del niño, deja hacer un número más. Y para tener una identidad y un nombre. Cambia la dinámica y para ser un número de estudiante, aparece un nombre: la

mamá, el hijo de Rosario. Mi hijo se llama Mateo y este ya es el hijo de Rosario. ¿Por qué? Porque esa es una de las cosas impactantes del involucramiento. Lo que yo te digo de este momento tan difícil y es ahí donde yo cuestioné duramente el involucramiento. Entonces, el hecho de que yo haya estado involucrada fue clave para un niño aprendiz de inglés, un niño con problemas de lenguaje para sacar los máximos reconocimientos en la escuela. Entonces, en ese aspecto yo digo que mi impacto para mis hijos y también le haga impacto a otros niños de la escuela en la misma situación. Unas, las relaciones que se crean al estar involucrado con los directores, con los maestros, porque al final te sientas con ellos, a planear, a negociar, a ver maneras de cómo tu hijo puede salir adelante en el aspecto de mi hijo.

The capital gained by being involved allowed her to provide solutions to the school to serve students better. Beatriz started her role, and networks amplified her voice in sharing her community's needs.

**Beatriz:** *Tenemos varios sombreros. Entonces nosotros seguimos a parte del grupo de padres avanzados nosotros fuera del trabajo del comité. Nosotros seguimos haciendo lo que se necesita hacer. Creo que nosotros tenemos la fortuna de ver más directamente cuáles son las necesidades de nuestra comunidad, porque los padres de padre a padre, los padres, hablamos en más confianza. Ellos claramente lo que necesitamos. A veces las escuelas o los administradores maestros no se enteran de lo*

*que necesita la comunidad porque no hay confianza todavía. Y el involucramiento familiar y el trabajo en sociedad en el ámbito familiar tienen mucho que ver desarrollar la confianza. Así es que, como ahorita, por ejemplo, el hobby es una situación sumamente diferente, algo que nunca habíamos visto. Yo sigo trabajando en dar información a los padres. La meta del comité en el Inland Empire es que seamos agentes de cambio todos los que ya somos líderes y que lo podamos hacer. En el City hall, school board, a nivel estatal o a nivel federal, e incluso sería una binacional. Eso es lo que me ha dado el comité, me ha dado conocimiento porque entonces nos ha enlazado con otras organizaciones que no conocíamos y que son organizaciones que pueden hacer algo más por la comunidad. Y que no sabíamos, entonces el bricolaje me ha dado ha ayudado a tener más capacidad para poder servir a nuestra comunidad a otros niveles y más efectivamente nos pone en contacto en directo con las personas clave para que ciertas cosas se lleven a cabo.*

Beatriz explained she became an agent of change through her committee's involvement. Recognizing that the resources needed to reach her community, she knew there was a need. She expressed the importance of tapping into "whatever it takes" to make sure her community has what it needs. The network established through her professional development led her to leverage her tools and establish her leadership at total capacity.

**Gema:** *Entonces, si tú no tienes esas esas herramientas para ayudarles.*

*Pues no, ya no te vuelven a buscar nada, por no decir nunca me ayuda, entonces se vuelve una responsabilidad muy grande, una responsabilidad de que lo que tú les digas. Tiene que estar bien validado, Tiene que ser información correcta. Y si no la fe, pues me tengo que poner a investigar porque no me gusta dejar a alguna familia que tiene alguna duda o que tiene algún problema sin darles ninguna información, entonces. Y lo sé, la pila la puedo orientar, las oriento o los orientó. Y si no, tengo que empezar a buscar. Afortunadamente, algo de lo que me ha dejado estar en diferentes comités es que tengo manera de dónde buscar información. Tengo mis redes de contactos. Si algo yo no lo sé, sé quién me lo. Quién me puede ayudar, si no con la información, a decirme dónde buscar la información. Eso es una de las cosas que sí y si esa máxima de las costas, bien de que es que ha sido muy buena del comité. Es que mi red, mis redes, han crecido mis redes de contacto y eso me ha ayudado, me ha ayudado y me ayudan mucho cuando yo necesito alguna orientación a alguna familia de algo que me esté preguntando y yo no sé como yo no sé la información. Entonces acudo, acudo a mis redes, a mis redes de contacto, a preguntar y de ahí obtengo la información y las paso a las familias.*

Gema's experience reinforces that parent leadership at the third stage as

"vehículos de su comunidad" is essential. Gema shared she felt responsible for

what she shared and, if she did not know the answer, she tapped into her networks to find the answer.

### Summary

In summary, the data analysis revealed that parent leadership relates to qualities developed through stages (Figure 1). Each step reveals community cultural wealth traits that benefit parents early and becomes a communal gain that helps the community. Interlacing with Delgado-Gaitan(1994), Educacion tells the powerful impact higher levels of leadership in Latino parents can make. Through motivation, open-mindedness, cultural brokers, leadership, and much *corazón*, participants voiced that parental leadership develops out of a need to learn continuously. The willingness to take on that learning led them to become cultural brokers and their communities' voices. The Themes emerged through parent voices. Identidad or Identity was prevalent throughout the testimonials as a reflection of growth but most importantly as redefining themselves from mothers, to parents, leaders and as a resource in their community. Theme two, Capacitarme spok about the abundance of workshops trainings and hour of learning how to navigate the system to support their child. Theme three, through cultural brokers parents were empowered to take up leadership positions in their schools, districts and in the community. The tools gains allowed them to want more and know more. Finally, theme four, Soy el vehiculo de mi comunidad is about returning the resources parents accumulated back to the community.

Chapter five concludes this study with further recommendations to support districts in establishing Latino Parent Leaders in their community. The chapter discusses future studies and discusses how important the parent voice to further understand the needs of Latino students.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

As a Chicana, student, mother, and educator, this study was essential to me. My role as an educator has led me to witness the tremendous barriers Latino parents face while trying to navigate their child's educational system. At the same time, I have seen parents taking on leadership roles in their schools, districts, and community and making an impact in their children's lives. Parents' hopes, aspirations, and goals are with every child that enters public education. Partnerships among schools, families, and communities are central to improving student achievement and a key indicator of struggling students' opportunities (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). Therefore, understanding how to navigate these educational spaces is essential for Latino parents. The women in this study knew there was a need to understand the educational system to change their children's trajectory. This study led me to reflect historically on various cases on the role parents played in advocating for their children's educational rights throughout California's critical cases. The mothers in this study are a fraction of the nation's leading student population who have and continue to be parent leaders in their communities. The leap from parental involvement to parental leadership led me to explore how Latino parents transition from being involved parents to parent leaders. (The questions guiding this study )

## Overview

Despite these patterns, this population faces challenges along the educational pipeline, deficit stigma, and subtractive schooling (Anzaldua,2002, Garcia&Guerra,2004; Solorzano&Solorzano 1995; Valenzuela, 1999; Wortham, Murillo & Hamann, 2002). Latino parents continue to break down barriers to better meet their children's needs and change the trajectory of their children's future. This study is different from other studies because much of the research reviewed, as stated by Flores (2017), reported that Latino students and their families prioritize education. Yet, little research is moving beyond involvement and establishing active parental leadership. This study is different because it led in capturing what led a group of advanced parent leaders to their current capacity. Their leadership led me as the researcher to want to know more about this phenomenon, capture their voice, and begin to see how their journey established gains in their children and community.

Using the Phenomenological design and carrying the lens of Community cultural wealth(Yosso, 2005) to analyze the data led to understanding the particular development of the leadership of a group of women in the Inland Empire. The participants of this study were middle-aged Mexican mothers participated in a leadership group in conjunction with a local university, the county office of education, and a binational organization.

Their participation in this leadership group was essential in further understanding how they got to this leadership point and their impact on their

community. Furthermore, the study sought to create a voice, capture their journey, and understand how they had reached high levels of leadership and its effects on their children. Through semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and data analysis, I captured the lived experiences of a particular group of parent leaders and understand their journey to parent leadership. The study differs from other studies because most of the research surrounding Latino parents is based on parent involvement. This study is essential because it captured a counter-narrative of *education* and the aspiration these women have for their children and community.

### Summary of the Study

The research questions guiding this study were the following: How do Latino parent leaders describe their leadership experiences? What leads Latino parents to serve in leadership roles? In what ways, if any, do Latino parents' demonstrate leadership?

The research questions explored through a qualitative phenomenological study to achieve a deeper understanding of parent leaders' everyday experiences in one particular Inland Empire parent group. The data collected was triangulated using semi-structured interviews using Zoom, a focus group interview of all interviewees using the zoom, and the review of archival data publically available. The data collection followed social distancing guidelines to follow Covid regulations. The participants for this study were parents who held a leadership position within the last year in one particular parent leadership

institute. Since the research project was on parent leadership, the lens of leadership was essential.

The recruited participants were all women, middle-aged, and shared their journey, experiences as to what led them to their current leadership role, as the research made sense of their everyday experiences, as they all had a common phenomenon. Their leadership began with them becoming parents and a need for their children and a need to want to understand their children's educational system. In the process of learning, the women in the study were empowered, educated, and found their voice to speak out about their children's needs. The result has led them all to have 10-20 years of experience advocating, learning, and empowering other parents to commit.

The first research question explored their journey. Each participant brought up motherhood and the aspirations and dreams for wanting a better outcome for their children. A solid need to help their children succeed was a shared experience. Participants described their story and the first contact with their children's school. They described experiences and discussed the fear gained when you experience barriers navigating the unknown space. Each participant continuously shared stories of the related impact educators, administrators, and parents made to make them feel welcomed and heard. Cultural brokers align with Jezewski & Sotnik's (2001) definition of the impact brokers make on intermediating the cultural gaps. The mothers in this research all mentioned vital people that played an essential role in their parent leadership.

This first connection empowered them to be involved and learn. The stories highlighted the importance of community and the social capitals tapped into their journey for more significant gains. Their leadership experiences of the participants in this study highlighted the importance of "*Capacitarme*" or equipping myself with the tools needed to guide their children's educational journey. Words such as having the heart, being open-minded, willing to empower others, and understanding one's strengths and weaknesses were tools gained that led each participant to want to learn more. The women understood the importance of having a voice. They reflected on how rewarding their leadership roles have been in knowing their children succeed and remembering how their leadership roles have benefited tier communities. One of the participants' slogan was "*Plantando Semillas de Liderazgo*" or planting the seeds of leadership. I think it captures the response to my research question. Parent leadership is about empowering themselves and other parents to learn, question, and lead for the more significant gains of their children and the children in their community. Consistent with Cunningham and Ocon's (2012) research that suggests parent leaders become role models of school and community involvement not only for their children but also for other families. The cultural norms unfold the many assets and impact parent leaders make in their community and the established tremendous connection. Critical to understanding within the context of school leadership is that this becomes a powerful tool in understanding Latino parents'

educational needs and debunks the deficient mentality set forth historically about Latino parents.

The second research question explored what leads Latino parents into leadership roles. Fully capturing the voice throughout the findings and analyzing them through the lens of community cultural wealth as the framework to review the results led me to conclude that the women's experiences in this particular study were gained in stages and evolved as they gained consciousness of the educational system. There was a "*Ganas de Aprender*" or a will to want to learn more. The more knowledge gained, the more their identity evolved into leadership because other parents turned to them for resources. This unique phenomenon captures how the women in this study used their voice to question, suggest or lead parent groups on and off-campus. Their participation in various school site council meetings, English Language Advisory Committees, District Advisory Committees provided them with leadership development to participate in an advanced parent leadership group. The need to continue then evolved into their community and made sure they were the voice and change agents described in their community. The rich data collected allowed me to capture the phenomenon through a chart with how parental leadership evolves. Through the lens of community cultural wealth, I captured parental leadership's evolution by identifying them in stages. The stages developed will contribute to academia in understanding the capitals used and gained by parents in making the leap from involved parents to parent leaders. The stage is supported by Evans's (2015)

approach to school reform challenges deficit conceptions of nondominant parents and communities by emphasizing and strengthening their capacity to exercise power, leadership in creating a more equitable learning environment.

The final research question analyzed how leadership is demonstrated through parent leadership. The women in this particular study pride themselves in sharing that leadership begins at home with their families. The participants demonstrated leadership at various levels and pride themselves in entering spaces and using their voice. They are the “*Vehículos de su Comunidad*” or the drivers of their community. They have established an identity out of being an asset, and now the cultural brokers their communities in this final stage discussing their contributions. Examples of helping families access common resources during the pandemic, establishing third spaces for parents who have children with disabilities, or navigating the system with new parents were the fruits of their continuous labor and dedication. The particular parent group, the participants, have been involved in has been recognized by President Obama with a service award and allowed the women to feel proud. Leadership attributes captured in the findings demonstrate leadership is a daily practice in their lives, from talking to their children or talking in front of a group of parents. The resources gained from advanced parent leadership opportunities or groups become resources tapped into for community gains. The women described how they had established a connection with parents via social media to distribute resources or support one another. During the focus group, the collective shared

how they know each other's leadership strengths and leverage into one another for help. Leadership was evident across social media, multiple conference presentations, and shared in their interviews their impact goes beyond navigating educational spaces but being a helping hand when needed. Each participant has further taken their leadership into their areas and applied the tools gained to lead church, family, other parent spaces.

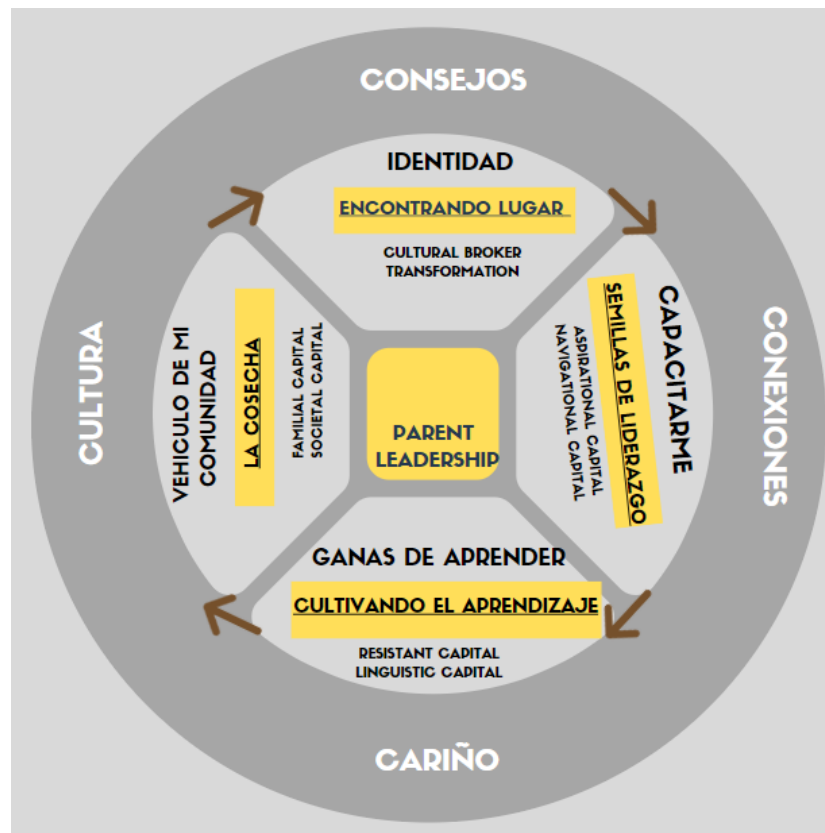
### Parent Contributions to Academia

The study conducted contributes to existing research in a myriad of ways. First, it reaffirms the importance of establishing solid partnerships among families, schools, and communities to increase academic achievement (Marshall, 2008). Furthermore, it captures the voice of parents. Giving voice to parent leaders supports the research on parents' significant contributions when connections are built with parents and when leadership skills opportunities are available. Keeping Calderon (2012 ) on the importance of whose knowledge is valuable. For the academic Latino students' educational outcomes, parents' voice and agency are needed (Fernandez & Paredes Scribner 2018). The current research captures counter-narratives of how parents' leadership has transformed various campuses across the Inland Empire.

Parents have used their leadership skills to participate in various national conferences to discuss the need for parents. Parent leaders naturally carry an asset-based mentality and know the needs of their community. They have



transformed themselves as the cultural brokers connecting parents to campuses, leading their parent groups third spaces to secure their personal needs. Thus, a disconnect exists between parents and the school system on engaging Latino families in their children's education. The various testimonials captured in this study sheds light on what led these women to such high leadership capacities. Flores (2017) research discussed the importance of moving parents from involved to parent leaders. The present study captures the phenomenon of a group of parent leaders as they describe the experiences that led them to leap into parent leadership. It was the result out of a need for themselves, their children, and the community. The presented study results also support Marshalls(2008) on how parental leadership goes beyond influencing and benefiting the needs of a child and meeting the needs of the larger community. The need to educate and break barriers disconnecting the Latino community from the educational system. Therefore the parent voice captured various recommendations for district leadership to begin fostering parental supervision. The diagram below offers my contribution to academia on parent leadership phenomenology developed with the participants in this study. Their voices captured the importance of interlacing and fostering leadership.



### Recommendation for School District: *Consejos*

The participants' lived experiences in this study conclude the importance of listening to parents and recognizing the community cultural wealth students enter in an educational environment. For systematic change to occur, change in the process is needed. Collaboration, inclusion engaging the most affected (Oakes & Rogers, 2007) will begin a dialogue on how further to meet the Latino community's educational needs. Latino parents continue to face barriers in front

of them while trying to navigate the school system, but parent leaders have defined their barriers as assets. The capitals of community cultural wealth immersed through the data on what sustains parents to parent leaders' developmental process. The community cultural capitals of Aspirational, Linguistic, Navigational, Familial, Societal, and Resistant intertwine the leaps that lead from involved parent to a parent leader. As previously stated, the Pew Research Center (2009) reported that Latino students have the highest dropout rates and the lowest college completion rates. The risk factors contributing to Latino youth's low achievement and attainment (Eamon, 2005; García-Coll et al., 2002; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005; Prelow & Loukas, 2003) have impacted generations of students due to the misalignment of understanding the needs. Therefore, created partnerships will bridge a shared responsibility to open dialogue in Latino students' education and provide an asset-based mentality on what students do have to contribute and how districts can tap into students' capitals.

Meanwhile, this study captures parent leaders' experiences who have continuously been involved on and off school grounds. The spaces outside of school districts have led many participants to activate their voice and establish autonomy to align with their needs. There needs to be an invitation for parent leaders to have an opportunity to voice their concerns and be part of the solution-oriented committees at school districts, more than anyone who knows the needs

of their children. Therefore, a voice at the table as collaborators will begin the critical conversations on meeting their children's educational needs further.

- Welcoming school Environments at all campus sites
- The first contact with the school must be friendly and open-minded
- Parent invitation to dialogue on best practices to support Latino Students at school sites and district level.
- Safe Spaces for parents at district and county levels to cultivate parent leadership.
- Willingness to listen and be open-minded to include parent leaders in decision making.

Therefore, to cultivate parent leadership, there needs to be a seat at the table to have collaborative and constructive conversations on Latino students' needs. Activating a parent voice can also empower parents to guide other parents in understanding the school system.

### Next Steps for Educational Reform

This study is grounded on activating parent leadership, and parents are an essential partner in increasing academic achievement. Therefore for educational reform to occur, parent inclusion conversations on how to better serve their children. Establishing parent leadership opportunities beyond compliance-driven committees allows parents to voice potential solutions. Furthermore, investments in parental leadership training activate parents as partners while public education

reaps the benefits of the cultural wealth parents can contribute to school districts. As a result, parents know how to connect to the community and bridge the partnership between parents and schools.

Reevaluation of current deficit perceptions on Latino students and parents reframed with an asset-based lens on how and what can they contribute to our school systems is needed. Formal or higher education is not an automatic requirement in analyzing the needs of Latino students, parent aspirations, hopes, language, and taking the time to listen to further understand the barriers and bring awareness in further meeting the needs of students. Overall, further research exploring how parental leadership is evolved will allow paving pathways of success for other generations of Latino students.

#### Recommendations for Future Research

Further research is needed in parental leadership to capture the stories, experiences, and voices of parents who have dedicated themselves to their communities. Below are recommendations for further studies:

- Qualitative research on the development of parent leadership in Southern California
- A longitudinal study examined parental leadership and its long-term effects on their children's college experiences.
- A Phenomenological study is examining Latino males in parental leadership roles.

The suggested studies lead to further continue the necessary research on providing insights on what parental leadership can contribute to the school districts.

### Limitations of the Study

There are limitations to this phenomenological study on parental leadership. This study was particular to a group of parents who were part of a specific advanced parent group in the Inland Empire. Therefore generalizing their experiences to all parent leaders sets limitations.

Next, since a prerequisite for this research was parent leadership experience, the sample size was small. I initially had aimed to recruit ten members, yet only four members with the qualifications continued with the study—a limitation in the study to generalize to all parent leaders.

Third, the study on parental leadership was limited to only female perspectives. The women volunteered to participate in the study. Therefore, the male perspective is missing in this study and a limitation.

### Conclusion

The participants in this study have an asset-based mentality towards navigating the educational school system of their children. In the process, their experiences revealed the need to involve parents out of a personal market and establish leadership out of their own children's needs. The more knowledge

gained around their children's trajectory, they realized parental leadership was a leap in creating more significant gains for the community.

Participants expressed with so much heart what the Parent leadership role means for them, their families and their community. It has allowed them to become a resource. They pride themselves in their role and knowing they are making an impact in their community.

Based on the results Latino Parent leadership evolves and continues to evolve. It is not linear but cyclical. Parents revisit the stages of leadership based on the new knowledge they gain. The best analogy to capture this phenomenon is imagining cultural brokers' role as farmers and parental leadership being a seed. The cyclical learning of identity, planting, cultivating, and harvest leadership is crucial, and the outcome empowers parent leaders to become the cultural brokers in future cycles. The unwritten Educacion of carino , cultura, consejos, and connection brings parents as active members at the decision table for the collaborative purpose of involving more parents to take an active role in their children's education. In conclusion, as parents evolve:

- They lead families.
- So do parent spaces.
- So do their school districts. '
- So does their community.
- They become cultural brokers, link and voice to their community.
  - So does their language.

APPENDIX A  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL





June 3, 2020

**CSUSB INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD**

Expedited Review

IRB-FY2020-320

Status: Approved

Ms. Sussan Ortega and Prof. Enrique Murillo  
Doctoral Studies Program and Dept. of Teacher Education & Foundation  
California State University, San Bernardino  
5500 University Parkway  
San Bernardino, California 92407

Dear Ms. Ortega and Prof. Murillo:

Your application to use human participants, titled "Parent Leaders in Nuestras Escuelas " has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). The informed consent document you submitted is the official version for your study and cannot be changed without prior IRB approval. You are required to keep copies of the informed consent forms and data for at least three years.

The study is approved from June 2, 2020 through June 1, 2021.

Your IRB application must be renewed annually and you will receive notification from the Cayuse IRB automated notification system when your study is due for renewal. If your study is closed to enrollment, the data has been de-identified, and you're only analyzing the data - you may close the study by submitting the Closure Application Form through the Cayuse IRB system.

You are required to notify the IRB of the following as mandated by the Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP) federal regulations 45 CFR 46 and CSUSB IRB policy. The forms (modification, renewal, unanticipated/adverse event, study closure) are located in the Cayuse IRB System with instructions provided on the IRB Applications, Forms, and Submission Webpage. Failure to notify the IRB of the following requirements may result in disciplinary action.

- Ensure your CITI Human Subjects Training is kept up-to-date and current throughout the study.
- Submit a protocol modification (change) if any changes (no matter how minor) are proposed in your study for review and approval by the IRB before being implementing in your study.
- Notify the IRB within 5 days of any unanticipated or adverse events experienced by subjects during your research.

- Submit a study closure through the Cayuse IRB submission system once your study has ended.
- Maintain copies of your IRB approval letter, informed consent, and other IRB documents in your records.

The CSUSB IRB has not evaluated your proposal for scientific merit, except to weigh the risks and benefits to the human participants in your IRB application. This approval notice does not replace any departmental or additional approvals which may be required. If you have any questions regarding the IRB decision, please contact Michael Gillespie, the IRB Compliance Officer. Mr. Michael Gillespie can be reached by phone at (909) 537-7588, by fax at (909) 537-7028, or by email at [mgillesp@csusb.edu](mailto:mgillesp@csusb.edu). Please include your application approval number IRB-FY2020-320 in all correspondence. Any complaints you receive regarding your research from participants or others should be directed to Mr. Gillespie.

Best of luck with your research.

Sincerely,

*Donna Garcia*

Donna Garcia, Ph.D., IRB Chair  
CSUSB Institutional Review Board

DG/MG

APPENDIX B  
PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT FLYER



College of Education  
Office of Doctoral Studies

La Junta de Revisión Institucional de la Universidad Estatal de California, San Bernardino, aprobó este estudio

Hola \_\_\_\_\_

Mi nombre es Sussan Ortega y soy estudiante del departamento de Liderazgo Educativo de La Universidad Estatal de San Bernardino. Le escribo para invitarlo a participar en mi estudio de investigación sobre el liderazgo de los padres latinos. Usted es elegible para participar en este estudio porque tiene o desempeñó un papel de liderazgo en \_\_\_\_\_ en el último año. Obtuve su información de contacto de su participación en la conferencia \_\_\_\_\_ LEAD.

Si decide participar en este estudio, participará en una entrevista de 30 a 45 minutos seguida de una entrevista de grupo focal de 30 a 45 minutos con todos los participantes entrevistados. Me gustaría grabar en audio su entrevista y luego usaré la información para transcribir los datos para apoyar la investigación sobre el liderazgo de los padres latinos.

Recuerde, esto es voluntario. Puedes elegir estar en el estudio o no. Si desea participar o tiene alguna pregunta sobre el estudio, envíe un correo electrónico a 003320927@csusb.edu o contáctame al 909 576-7544.

Muchas gracias.

Sinceramente,

Sussan Ortega

## REFERENCES

- Acuna Castillo, O. L. (2019). *Latinx parents organizing toward a liberated education* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (22617671)
- Alvarez, R., Jr. (1995). The Mexican-US BORDER: The making of an anthropology of borderlands. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 24(1), 447–470. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.an.24.100195.002311>
- Anzaldúa, G. (1990). *Making face, making soul: Haciendo caras: Creative and critical perspectives by feminists of color* (1st ed.). San Francisco, CA: Aunt Lute Foundation Books.
- Anzaldúa, G. (1999). Chapter 22: Putting Coyolxauhqui Together: A Creative Process. *Counterpoints*, 90, 241-261. Retrieved March 17, 2021, from <http://www.jstor.org.libproxy.lib.csusb.edu/stable/42975823>
- Anzaldúa, G. (2001). How to tame a wild tongue. (1987). In J. Ritchie & K. Ronald (Eds.), *Available means: An anthology of women's rhetoric(s)* (pp. 357–365). Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press; <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt5hjcnj.57>
- Anzaldúa, G. E., & Keating, A. (2002). *This bridge we call home: Radical visions for transformation*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Auerbach, A., & Goller, G. (1953). Parent education: The contribution of the professionally trained leader of parent discussion groups. *Marriage and Family Living*, 15(3), 265–269. <https://doi.org/10.2307/348699>

- Bernard, H. R. (2002). *Research methods in anthropology: Qualitative and quantitative methods* (3rd ed.). Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.
- Bolívar, J., & Chrispeels, J. (2011). Enhancing parent leadership through building social and intellectual capital. *American Educational Research Journal*, 48(1), 4–38. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831210366466>
- Brown, L., & Beckett, K. (2007). Building community in an urban school district: A case study of African American educational leadership. *School Community Journal*, 17(1), 7–32.
- Caballero, C., Martínez-Vu, Y., Pérez-Torres, J., Téllez, M., & Vega, C. (2019). *The Chicana m(other)work anthology: Porque sin madres no hay revolución*. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press.
- California Department of Education. (2018). *CA Education for a Global Economy Initiative*. Retrieved from <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/caedge.asp>
- Carter, E., Swedeen, B., Walter, M., & Moss, C. (2012). “I don’t have to do this by myself?” Parent-led community conversations to promote inclusion. *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, 37(1), 9–23. <https://doi.org/10.2511/027494812800903184>
- Chrispeels, J., & Rivero, E. (2001). Engaging Latino families for student success: How parent education can reshape parents’ sense of place in the education of their children. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 76(2), 119–169. [https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327930pje7602\\_7](https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327930pje7602_7)

- Coleman, J. (1966). Foundations for a theory of collective decisions. *American Journal of Sociology*, 71(6), 615–627. <https://doi.org/10.1086/224219>
- Coleman, J. (1988). Social capital in the creation of human capital. *American Journal of Sociology*, 94, S95–S120. <https://doi.org/10.1086/228943>
- Coleman, J. S., Campbell, E., Hobson, C., McPartland, J., Mood, F., Weinfeld, F., & York, R. (1966). *Equality of educational opportunity*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Cunningham, S., Kreider, H., & Ocon, J. (2012). Influence of a parent leadership program on participants' leadership capacity and actions. *School Community Journal*, 22(1), 111–124.
- Delgado-Gaitan, C. (1991). Involving parents in schools: A process of empowerment. *American Journal of Education*, 100(1), 20–46. <https://doi.org/10.1086/444003>
- Delgado-Gaitan, C. (1994). "Consejos": The power of cultural narratives. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 25(3), 298–316. <https://doi.org/10.1525/aeq.1994.25.3.04x0146p>

- Drummond, K. V., & Stipek, D. (2004). Low-income parents' beliefs about their role in children's academic learning. *The Elementary School Journal*, 104(3), 197–213. <https://doi.org/10.1086/499749>
- Eamon, M. K. (2005). Social-demographic, school, neighborhood, and parenting influences on the academic achievement of Latino young adolescents. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 34(2), 163–174. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-005-3214-x>
- Evans, M., & Shirley, D. (2008). The development of collective moral leadership among parents through education organizing. *New Directions for Youth Development*, 2008(117), 77–91. <https://doi.org/10.1002/yd.248>
- Evans, M., Newman, A., & Winton, S. (2015). Not your mother's PTA: Hybridity in community-based organizations working for educational reform. *The Educational Forum*, 79(3), 263–279. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131725.2015.1037510>
- Fernández, E., & Paredes Scribner, S. (2018). "Venimos Para que se oiga la voz": Activating community cultural wealth as parental educational leadership. *Journal of Research on Leadership Education*, 13(1), 59–78. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1942775117744011>
- Flores, A. (2017). *How the U.S. Hispanic population is changing*. Pew Research Center. Retrieved from <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/09/18/how-the-u-s-hispanic-population-is-changing/>



Freire, P. (1973). *Education for critical consciousness*. New York, NY: Seabury Press.

Freire, P. (1993). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (New rev. 20th Anniv. ed.). New York, NY: Continuum.

Freire, P. (1994). *Pedagogy of hope: Reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (R. R. Barr, Trans.). New York, NY: Bloomsbury.

Galloway, M. K., & Ishimaru, A. M. (2015). Radical recentering: Equity in educational leadership standards. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 51(3), 372–408. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X15590658>

Gándara, P., & Contreras, F. (2009). *The Latino education crisis: The consequences of failed social policies*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

García Coll, C., Akiba, D., Palacios, N., Bailey, B., Silver, R., DiMartino, L., & Chin, C. (2002). Parental involvement in children's education: Lessons from three immigrant groups. *Parenting, Science and Practice*, 2(3), 303–324. [https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327922PAR0203\\_05](https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327922PAR0203_05)

García, O. (2011). Educating New York's bilingual children: Constructing a future from the past. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 14(2), 133–153. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2010.539670>

García, S., & Guerra, P. (2004). Deconstructing deficit thinking: Working with educators to create more equitable learning environments. *Education and*

*Urban Society*, 36(2), 150–168.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0013124503261322>

Gaytán, F. X. (2014). *Creating a college culture for Latino students: Successful programs, practices, and strategies* by Concha Delgado Gaitan. *Journal of Latinos and Education*, 13(4), 317–319.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/15348431.2014.887471>

Glesne, C. (2011). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction* (4th ed.). New York, NY: Pearson.

Gold, E., Simon, E., & Brown, C. (2005). A new conception of parent engagement: Community organizing for school reform. In English, F. (Ed.), *Handbook of educational leadership: Advances in theory, research, and practice* (pp. 237–268). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE

Gollnick, D., & Chinn, P. (1986). *Multicultural education in a pluralistic society* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Pearson.

Griffith, J. (1998). The relation of school structure and social environment to parent involvement in elementary schools. *The Elementary School Journal*, 99(1), 53–80. <https://doi.org/10.1086/461916>

Gutiérrez, K., Baquedano-López, P., & Tejeda, C. (1999). Rethinking diversity: Hybridity and hybrid language practices in the third space. *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, 6(4), 286–303. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10749039909524733>

- Henderson, A. T., & Mapp, K. L. (2002). *A new wave of evidence: The impact of school, family, and community connections on student achievement*. Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.
- Henderson, A., Jacob, B., Kernan-Schloss, A., & Raimondo, B. (2004). *The case for parent leadership*. Lexington, KY: Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence.
- Hill, N., & Taylor, L. (2004). Parental school involvement and children's Academic achievement: Pragmatics and issues. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 13(4), 161–164. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0963-7214.2004.00298.x>
- Hill, N., & Torres, K. (2010). Negotiating the American Dream: The paradox of aspirations and achievement among Latino students and engagement between their families and schools. *The Journal of Social Issues*, 66(1), 95–112. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.2009.01635.x>
- Holmes, J. M. (1975). Bilingual Education: Serna v. Portales Municipal Schools. *New Mexico Law Review*, 5(2), 321–333.
- Hong, S. (2011). *A cord of three strands: A new approach to parent engagement in school*. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press.
- Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., Walker, J. M. T., Sandler, H. M., Whetsel, D., Green, C. L., Wilkins, A. S., & Closson, K. (2005). Why do parents become involved? Research findings and implications. *The Elementary School Journal*, 106(2), 105–130. <https://doi.org/10.1086/499194>

- Husserl, E. (1970). *The idea of phenomenology*. Leiden, Netherlands: Nijhoff.
- Ishimaru, A. (2014). Rewriting the rules of engagement: Elaborating a model of district-community collaboration. *Harvard Educational Review*, 84(2), 188–216. <https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.84.2.r2007u165m8207j5>
- Jasis, P., & Ordóñez-Jasis, R. (2004). Convivencia to empowerment: Latino parent organizing at La Familia. *High School Journal*, 88(2), 32–42. <https://doi.org/10.1353/hsj.2004.0023>
- Jencks, C., & Phillips, M. (Eds.). (1998). *The Black-White test score gap*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.
- Jencks, C., Smith, M., Bane, M. J., Cohen, D., Gintis, H., Heyns, B., & Michelson, S. (1972). *Inequality: A reassessment of the effects of family and schooling in America*. New York: Basic Books.
- Johnson, J. M. (2002). In-depth interviewing. In J. F. Gubrium, J. A. Holstein, J. F. Gubrium, & J. A. Holstein (Eds.), *Handbook of interview research: Context & method* (pp. 103–120). Thousand Oaks, CA, USA: Sage Publications.
- Khalifa, M. (2013). Creating spaces for urban youth: The emergence of culturally responsive (hip-hop) school leadership and pedagogy. *Multicultural Learning and Teaching*, 8(2), 63–93. <https://doi.org/10.1515/mlt-2013-0010>

- Khalifa, M., Arnold, N. W., & Newcomb, W. (2015). Understand and advocate for communities first. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 96(7), 20–25.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0031721715579035>
- Khalifa, M., Jennings, M., Briscoe, F., Oleszweski, A., & Abdi, N. (2014). Racism? Administrative and community perspectives in data-driven decision making: Systemic perspectives versus technical-rational perspectives. *Urban Education*, 49(2), 147–181.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085913475635>
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1994). What we can learn from multicultural education research. *Educational Leadership*, 51(8), 22–26.
- Ladwig, J. (1994). For whom this reform?: Outlining educational policy as a social field. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 15(3), 341–363.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/0142569940150303>
- Lareau, A. (2002). Invisible inequality: Social class and childrearing in Black families and White families. *American Sociological Review*, 67, 747–776.  
<https://doi.org/10.2307/3088916>
- Lee, J. (2002). Racial and ethnic achievement gap trends: Reversing the progress toward equity? *Educational Researcher*, 31(1), 3–12.  
<https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X031001003>
- Lopez, M. E., Kreider, H., & Coffman, J. (2005). Intermediary organizations as capacity builders in family educational involvement. *Urban Education*, 40(1), 78–105. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085904270375>

- Lyon, L. L. (1933). *Investigation of the program for the adjustment of Mexican girls to the high schools of the San Fernando Valley* [Unpublished master's thesis]. University of Southern California.
- Madison, D. S. (2005). *Critical ethnography: Method, ethics, and performance*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Madrid, E. (2008). The unheralded history of the Lemon Grove desegregation case. *Multicultural Education*, 15(3), 15–19.
- Marschall, M. (2008). Local school councils and parent involvement in Chicago. *Evaluation Exchange*, XIV(1/2). Retrieved from <http://hfrp.org/evaluation/the-evaluation-exchange/issue-archive/building-the-future-of-family-involvement/local-school-councils-and-par-ent-involvement-in-chicago>
- Marx, K., & McLellan, D. (1977). *Selected writings*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Maxwell, J. (2005). *Qualitative research: An interactive design* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- McCormick, J., & Ayala, C. (2007). Felicita “La Prieta” Mendez (1916–1998) and the end of Latino school segregation in California. Centro. *Journal of the Center for Puerto Rican Studies*, 19(2), 12–35.
- Merriam, S. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education. Revised and expanded from Case Study Research in Education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

- Oakes, J., & Rogers, J. (2006). *Learning power: Organizing for education and justice*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Oakes, J., & Rogers, J. (2007). Radical change through radical means: Learning power. *Journal of Educational Change*, 8(3), 193–206.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10833-007-9031-0>
- Ogbu, J. U. (1992). Understanding cultural diversity and learning. *Educational Researcher*, 21(8), 5–14. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X021008005>
- Olivas, M. (2013). Ask not for whom the law school bell tolls: Professor Tamanaha, Failing Law Schools, and (mis)diagnosing the problem. *Washington University Journal of Law and Policy*, 41, 101–.
- Ortegon, R. Ray. (2014). *LULAC v. Richards: The class action lawsuit that prompted the South Texas Border Initiative and enhanced access to higher education for Mexican Americans living along the South Texas border* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (3604989)
- Paredes Scribner, S., & Fernández, E. (2017). Organizational politics of parental engagement: The intersections of school reform, anti-immigration policies, and Latinx parent organizing. *Educational Policy*, 31(6), 895–920.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0895904817719527>
- Porras, D. (2019). Latina mothers of emergent bilinguals as policymakers? Barriers and opportunities toward critical participation in LCAP. *Peabody*

*Journal of Education*, 94(2), 226–239.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/0161956X.2019.1598130>

Prelow, H. M., & Loukas, A. (2003). The role of resource, protective, and risk factors on academic achievement-related outcomes of economically disadvantaged Latino youth. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 31(5), 513–529. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.10064>

Ream, R. K., & Palardy, G. J. (2008). Reexamining social class differences in the availability and the educational utility of parental social capital. *American Educational Research Journal*, 45(2), 238–273.  
<https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831207308643>

Redding, S., Murphy, M., & Sheley, P. (2011). *Handbook on family and community engagement*. Charlotte, N.C.: Information Age Pub.

Reese, L., Balzano, S., Gallimore, R., & Goldenberg, C. (1995). The concept of educación: Latino family values and American schooling. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 23(1), 57–81.  
[https://doi.org/10.1016/0883-0355\(95\)93535-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/0883-0355(95)93535-4)

Rothstein, R. (2004). *Class and schools: Using social, economic, and educational reform to close the black-white achievement gap*. Washington, D.C.: Economic Policy Institute.

Rumberger, R. W., & Arellano, B., (2007). *Student and school predictors of high school graduation in California* (Report #5). California Dropout Research Project.



- Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.
- Santiago, D. A., Galdeano, M. C., & Taylor, M. (2015). *Factbook 2015: The Condition of Latinos in Education*. Washington, DC: Excelencia in Education.
- Shram, T. H. (2006). *Conceptualizing and proposing qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- Solórzano, D. G., & Solórzano, R. W. (1995). The Chicano educational experience: A framework for effective schools in Chicano communities. *Educational Policy*, 9(3), 293–314.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0895904895009003005>
- Spradley, J. P. (1979). *The ethnographic interview*. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.
- Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Stake, R. E. (2005). Qualitative case studies. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 443–466). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Steinberg, L., Dornbusch, S., & Brown, B. (1992). Ethnic differences in adolescent achievement. *The American Psychologist*, 47(6), 723–729.  
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.47.6.723>
- Stipek, D. J. (2002). *Motivation to learn: From theory to practice* (4th ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

- Taylor, M. C. (1927). *Retardation of Mexican children in the Albuquerque schools*. [Unpublished master's thesis]. Leland Stanford Junior University.
- Thernstrom, S., & Thernstrom, A. (2003). *No excuses: Closing the racial gap in learning*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster.
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2000). *U.S. Census 2000*. Retrieved September 9, 2007 from <http://www.census.gov/dmd/www/pdf/d61a.pdf>
- Valencia, R. (2002). "Mexican Americans don't value education!" On the basis of the myth, mythmaking, and debunking. *Journal of Latinos and Education*, 1(2), 81–103. [https://doi.org/10.1207/S1532771XJLE0102\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1207/S1532771XJLE0102_2)
- Valencia, R. R. (2010). *Dismantling contemporary deficit thinking: Educational thought and practice*. New York, NY: RoutledgeValenzuela.
- <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203853214>
- Valencia, R. R. (Ed.). (1997). *The evolution of deficit thinking: Educational thought and practice*. New York, NY: RoutledgeFalmer.
- Valenzuela, A. (1999). *Subtractive schooling: U.S.-Mexican youth and the politics of caring*. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Vincent, C. (1996). Parent Empowerment? Collective action and inaction in education. *Oxford Review of Education*, 22(4), 465–482.
- <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305498960220407>
- Wollenberg, C. (1971). Ethnic experiences in California history: An impressionistic survey. *California History (San Francisco)*, 50(3), 221–233.
- <https://doi.org/10.2307/25157331>

- Wortham, S., Murillo, E., & Hamann, E. (2002). *Education in the new Latino diaspora: Policy and the politics of identity*. Westport, Conn.: Ablex Pub.
- Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Yin, R. K. (2006). Case study methods. In J. L. Green, G. Camilli, & P. B. Elmore (Eds.), *Handbook of complementary methods in education research* (pp. 111–122). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Yin, R. K. (2008). *Case study research: Design and methods* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Yosso, T. (2005). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, 8(1), 69–91.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1361332052000341006>
- Yosso, T., & Solorzano, D. (2006). *Leaks in the Chicana and Chicano educational pipeline* (Latino Policy & Issues Brief Number 13). Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center.
- Zarate, M. E., & Tomas Rivera Policy Institute. (2007). *Understanding Latino parental involvement in education: Perceptions, expectations, and recommendations*. Tomas Rivera Policy Institute.
- Zarate, M. E., & Conchas, G. Q. (2010). Contemporary and critical methodological shifts in research on Latino education. In E. G. Murillo, Jr., S. A. Villenas, R. T. Galván, J. S. Muñoz, & C. Martinez (Eds.), *Handbook*

*of Latinos and education: Theory, research, and practice* (pp. 63–89). New York: Routledge.

Zarate, M., & Gàndara, P. (2019). Can the LCFF improve teaching and learning for EL students? A review of the emerging research in California and directions for future implementation. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 94(2), 157–175. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0161956X.2019.1598111>